THE

WORKS

OF

J. J. ROUSSEAU.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

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JULIA:

OR,

The NEW ELOISA.

VOL. III.

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LETTER CXXX.

To Lord B——.

YES, my Lord, I affirm it; in this family, the uſeful and agreeable are united throughout: but occupations of uſe are not confined to thoſe purſuits which yield profit: they comprehend farther every innocent and harmleſs amuſement which may improve a reliſh for retirement, labour, and temperance, and which may contribute to preſerve the mind in a vigorous ſtate, and keep the heart free from the tumults of paſſion. If inactive indolence begets nothing but melancholy and irkſomeneſs, the delights of an agreeable leiſure are the fruits of a laborious life. We only work to enjoy ourſelves; the viciſſitude of labour and recreation is our natural ſtate. The repoſe which gives refreſhment after paſt labours, and encouragement to renew them, is not leſs neceſſary for man than labour itſelf.

After having admired the good conſequences attending the vigilance and care of the prudent Julia in the conduct of her family, I was witneſs of the good effects of the recreation ſhe uſes in a retired place, where ſhe takes her favourite walk, and which ſhe calls her elyſium.

I had frequently heard them talk of this elyſium, of which they made a myſtery before me. Yeſterday, however, the exceſſive heat being almoſt equally intolerable both within doors and without, Mr Wolmar propoſed to his wife to make holiday that afternoon, and inſtead of going into the nurſery towards evening as uſual, to come and breathe the freſh air with us in the orchard; ſhe conſented, and thither we went.

This place, though juſt cloſe to the houſe, is ſo concealed by a ſhady walk, that it is not viſible from any point. The thick foliage with which it is environed, renders it impervious to the eye, and it is always carefully locked up. I was ſcarce got within-ſide, but the door being covered with alder and haſle-trees, I could not find out which way I came in, when I turned back; and ſeeing no door, it ſeemed as if I had dropped from the clouds.

Upon entering into this diſguiſed orchard, I was ſeized with an agreeable ſenſation; the freſhneſs of the thick foliage, the beautiful and lovely verdure, the flowers ſcattered on each ſide, the murmuring of the purling ſtream, and the warbling of a thouſand birds, ſtruck my imagination as powerfully as my ſenſes; but at the ſame time I thought myſelf in the moſt wild and ſolitary place in nature, and I appeared as if I had been the firſt mortal who had ever penetra-

netrated into this deſart ſpot. Being ſeized with aſtoniſhment, and tranſported at ſo unexpected a ſight, I remained motionleſs for ſome time, and cried out, in an involuntary fit of enthuſiaſm, O Tinian! O Juan Fernandez *! Julia, the world's end is at your threſhold! Many people, ſaid ſhe, with a ſmile, think in the ſame manner; but twenty paces at moſt preſently brings them back to Clarens: let us ſee whether the charm will work longer upon you. This is the ſame orchard where you have walked formerly, and where you have played at romps with my couſin. You may remember that the graſs was almoſt burned up, the trees thinly planted, affording very little ſhade, and that there was no water. You find that now it is freſh, verdant, cultivated, embelliſhed with flowers, and well watered; what do you imagine it may have coſt me to put it into the condition you ſee? For you muſt know that I am the ſuperintendant, and that my huſband leaves the entire management of it to me. In truth, ſaid I, it has coſt you nothing but inattention. It is indeed a delightful ſpot, but wild and ruſtic; and I can diſcover no marks of human induſtry. You have concealed the door; the water ſprings I know not whence; nature alone has done all the reſt, and even you could not have mended her work. It is true, ſaid ſhe, that nature has done every thing, but under my direction, and you ſee nothing but what has been done under my orders. Gueſs once more. Firſt, I replied, I cannot con-

* Deſart iſlands in the South-ſea, celebrated in Lord Anſon's voyage.

conceive how labour and expence can be made to ſupply the effects of time. The trees . . . As to them, ſaid Mr Wolmar, you may obſerve that there are none very large, and they were here before. Beſides, Julia began this work a long while before her marriage, and preſently after her mother's death, when ſhe uſed to come here with her father in queſt of ſolitude. Well, ſaid I, ſince you will have theſe large and maſſy bowers, theſe ſloping tufts, theſe umbrageous thickets to be the growth of ſeven or eight years, and to be partly the work of art, I think you have been a good œconomiſt if you have done all within this vaſt circumference for two thouſand crowns. You have only gueſſed two thouſand crowns too much, ſays ſhe, for it coſt me nothing. How! nothing? No, nothing; unleſs you place a dozen days work in the year to my gardener's account, as many to two or three of my people, and ſome to Mr Wolmar, who has ſometimes condeſcended to officiate, in my ſervice, as a gardener. I could not comprehend this riddle; but Julia, who had hitherto held me, ſaid to me, letting me looſe, Go, and you will underſtand it. Farewell Tinian, farewell Juan Fernandez, farewell all enchantment! In a few minutes you will find your way back from the end of the world.

I began to wander over the orchard thus metamorphoſed with a kind of ecſtaſy; and if I found no exotic plants, nor any of the products of the Indies, I found all thoſe which were natural to the ſoil, diſpoſed and blended in ſuch a manner as to produce the moſt chearful and lively effect. The verdant turf, thick, but ſhort

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and cloſe, was intermixed with wild thyme, balm, ſweet marjoram, and other fragrant herbs. You might perceive a thouſand wild flowers dazzle your eyes, among which you would be ſurpriſed to diſcover ſome garden-flowers, which ſeemed to grow natural with the reſt. I now and then met with ſhady tufts as impervious to the rays of the ſun, as if they had been in a thick foreſt. Theſe tufts were compoſed of trees of a very flexible nature, the branches of which they bend, till they hang on the ground, and take root, as I have ſeen ſome trees naturally do in America. In the more open ſpots, I ſaw here and there buſhes of roſes, raſberries, and gooſberries, little plantations of lilack, haſle-trees, alders, ſeringa, broom, and trefoil, diſperſed without any order or ſymmetry, and which embelliſhed the ground, at the ſame time that it gave it the appearance of being overgrown with weeds. I followed the track through irregular and ſerpentine walks, bordered by theſe flowery thickets, and covered with a thouſand garlands compoſed of vines, hopes, roſe-weed, ſnake-weed, and other plants of that kind, with which honey-ſuckles and jeſſamine deigned to interwine. Theſe garlands ſeemed as if they were ſcattered careleſly from one tree to another, and formed a kind of drapery over our heads which ſheltered us from the ſun; while under foot we had ſmooth, agreeable, and dry walking upon a fine moſs, without ſand or graſs or any rugged ſhoots. Then it was I firſt diſcovered, not without aſtoniſhment, that this verdant and buſhy umbrage, which had deceived me ſo much at a diſtance, was compoſed of theſe

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luxuriant and creeping plants, which running all along the trees, formed a thick foliage over head, and afforded ſhade and freſhneſs under foot. I obſerved likewiſe, that by means of common induſtry, they had made ſeveral of theſe plants take root in the trunks of the trees, ſo that they ſpread more, being nearer the top. You will readily conceive that the fruit is not the better for theſe additions; but this is the only ſpot where they have ſacrificed the uſeful to the agreeable, and in the reſt of their grounds they have taken ſuch care of the trees, that, without the orchard, the return of fruit is greater than it was formerly. If you do but conſider how delightful it is to meet with wild fruit in the midſt of a wood, and to refreſh one's ſelf with it, you will eaſily conceive what a pleaſure it muſt be to meet with excellent and ripe fruit in this artificial deſart, though it grows but here and there, and has not the moſt tempting appearance; which however, gives one the pleaſure of ſearching and picking out the beſt.

All theſe little walks were bordered and croſſed by a clear and limpid rivulet, which one while winded through the graſs and flowers in ſtreams ſcarce perceptible; at another, ruſhed in more copious floods upon a clear and ſpeckled gravel, which rendered the water more tranſparent. You might perceive the ſprings riſe and bubble out of the earth; and ſometimes you might obſerve deep canals, in which the calm and gentle fluid ſerved as a mirror to reflect the objects around. Now, ſaid I to Julia, I comprehend all the reſt: but theſe waters which I ſee on every ſide? .... They come from

from thence, ſhe replied, pointing to that ſide where the terraſs lies. It is the ſame ſtream which, at a vaſt expence, ſupplied the fountain, in the flower-garden, for which nobody cares. Mr Wolmar will not deſtroy it, out of reſpect to my father who had it made; but with what pleaſure do we come here every day to ſee this water run through the orchard, which we never look at in the garden! The fountain plays for the entertainment of ſtrangers; this little rivulet flows for our amuſement. It is true that I have likewiſe brought hither the water from the public fountain, which emptied itſelf into the lake, through the highway, to the detriment of paſſengers, beſides its running to waſte without profit to any one. It formed an elbow at the foot of the orchard between two rows of willows; I have taken them within my incloſure, and I bring the ſame water hither through different channels.

I then perceived that all the contrivance conſiſted in managing theſe ſtreams, ſo as to make them flow in meanders, by ſeparating and uniting them at proper places, by making them run as little upon the ſlope as poſſible, in order to lengthen their courſe, and make the moſt of a few little murmuring caſcades. A lay of earth, covered with ſome gravel from the lake, and ſtrewed over with ſhells, forms a bed for theſe waters. The ſame ſtreams running at proper diſtances under ſome large tiles covered with earth and turf, on a level with the ground, form a kind of artificial ſprings where they iſſue forth. Some ſmall ſtreams ſpout through pipes on ſome rugged places, and bubble as they fall.

The ground thus refreſhed and watered, continually yields freſh flowers, and keeps the graſs always verdant and beautiful.

The more I wandered over this delightful aſylum, the more I found the agreeable ſenſation improve which I experienced at my firſt entrance: nevertheleſs, my curioſity kept me in exerciſe; I was more eager to view the objects around me, than to inquire into the cauſe of the impreſſions they made on me, and I choſe to reſign myſelf to that delightful contemplation, without taking the trouble of reflection; but Mrs Wolmar drew me out of my reverie, by taking me under the arm: All that you ſee, ſaid ſhe, is nothing but vegetable and inanimate nature, which, in ſpite of us, always leaves behind it a melancholy idea of ſolitude. Come and view nature animated and more affecting. There you will diſcover ſome new charm every minute in the day. You anticipate me, ſaid I; I hear a confuſed chirping noiſe, and I ſee but few birds; I ſuppoſe you have an aviary. True, ſaid ſhe, let us go to it. I durſt not as yet declare what I thought of this aviary; but there was ſomething in the idea of it which diſpleaſed me, and did not ſeem to correſpond with the reſt.

We went down, through a thouſand turnings, to the bottom of the orchard, where I found all the water collected in a fine rivulet, flowing gently between two rows of old willows, which had been frequently lopped. Their tops being hollow and half bare, formed a kind of veſſel, from whence, by the contrivance I juſt now mentioned, grew ſeveral tufts of honey-ſuckles, of which

which one part interwined among the branches, and the other dropped careleſly along the ſide of the rivulet. Near the extremity of the incloſure, was a little baſon, bordered with graſs, bulruſhes, and weeds, which ſerved as a watering-place to the aviary, and was the laſt uſe made of this water, ſo precious and ſo well managed.

A little beyond this baſon was a platform, which was terminated, in an angle of the incloſure, by a hillock planted with a number of little trees of all kinds; the ſmalleſt ſtood towards the ſummit, and their ſize increaſed, in proportion as the ground grew lower, which made their tops appear to be horizontal, or at leaſt ſhewed that they were one day intended to be ſo. In the front ſtood a dozen of trees, which were young as yet, but of a nature to grow very large, ſuch as the beech, the elm, the aſh, and the acacia. The groves on this ſide ſerved as an aſylum to that vaſt number of birds which I had heard chirping at a diſtance; and it was under the ſhade of this foliage, as under a large umbrello, that you might ſee them hop about, run, friſk, provoke each other, and fight, as if they had not perceived us. They were ſo far from flying at our approach, that according to the notion with which I was prepoſſeſſed, I imagined them to have been incloſed within a wire; but when we came to the border of the baſon, I ſaw ſeveral of them alight, and come towards us through a ſhort walk which parted the platform in two, and made a communication between the baſon and the aviary. Mr Wolmar then going round the baſon, ſcattered two or three handfuls of mixed grain, which he had in his

pocket, along the walk, and when he retired, the birds flocked together and began to feed like ſo many chickens, with ſuch an air of familiarity, that I plainly perceived they had been trained up to it. This is charming, ſaid I: your uſing the word aviary, ſurpriſed me at firſt, but I now ſee what it is; I perceive that you invite them as your gueſts, inſtead of confining them as your priſoners. What do you mean by our gueſts? replied Julia; it is we who are theirs. They are maſters here, and we pay them for admitting us ſometimes. Very well, ſaid I, but how did theſe maſters get poſſeſſion of this ſpot? How did you collect together ſo many voluntary inhabitants? I never heard of any attempt of this kind, and if I had not occular proof of it, I could not have believed that ſuch a deſign could have ſucceeded.

Time and patience, ſaid Mr Wolmar, have worked this miracle. Theſe are expedients which the rich ſcarce ever think of in their pleaſures. Always in haſte for enjoyment, force and money are the only inſtruments they know how to employ; they have birds in cages, and friends at ſo much a month. If the ſervants ever came near this place, you would ſoon ſee the birds diſappear; and if you perceive vaſt numbers of them at preſent, the reaſon is, that this ſpot has always, in ſome degree, been a refuge for them. There is no bringing them together where there are none to invite them; but where there are ſome already, it is eaſy to increaſe their numbers, by anticipating all their wants, by not frightening them, by ſuffering them to hatch with ſecurity, and by never diſturbing the young

young ones in their neſt; for by theſe means, ſuch as there are, abide there, and thoſe which come after them continue. This grove was already in being, though it was divided from the orchard; Julia has only incloſed it by a quick-ſet hedge, removed that which parted it, and enlarged and adorned it with new deſigns. You ſee to the right and left of the walk which leads to it, two ſpaces filled with a confuſed mixture of graſs, ſtraw, and all ſorts of plants. She orders them every year to be ſown with corn, millet, turnſol, hemp-ſeed, vetch, and in general all ſorts of grain which birds are fond of, and nothing is ever reaped. Beſides this, almoſt every day ſhe or I bring them ſomething to eat; and when we neglect, Fanny ſupplies our place. They are ſupplied with water, as you ſee, very eaſily. Mrs Wolmar carries her attention ſo far as to provide for them, every ſpring, little heaps of hair, ſtraw, wool, moſs, and other materials proper to build their neſts. Thus by their having materials at hand, proviſions in abundance, and by the great care we take to ſecure them from their enemies *, the uninterrupted tranquillity they enjoy induces them to lay their eggs in this convenient place, where they want for nothing, and where nobody diſturbs them. Thus the habitation of the fathers becomes the abode of the children, and the colony thrives and multiplies.

Ah! ſaid Julia, do you ſee nothing more? No one thinks beyond himſelf; but the affection

* The mice, owls, hawks, and, above all, children.

of a conſtant pair, the zeal of their domeſtic concerns, paternal and maternal fondneſs, all this is loſt upon you. Had you been here two months ago, you might have feaſted your eyes with the moſt lovely ſight and have gratified your feelings with the moſt tender ſenſations in nature. Madam, ſaid I, ſomewhat gravely, you are a wife and a mother; theſe are pleaſures of which it becomes you to be ſuſceptible. Mr Wolmar then taking me cordially by the hand, ſaid, You have friends, and thoſe friends have children; how can you be a ſtranger to paternal affection? I looked at him, I looked at Julia, they looked at each other, and caſt ſuch an affecting eye upon me, that embracing them alternately, I ſaid with tender emotion, They are as dear to me as to yourſelf. I do not know by what ſtrange effect a ſingle word can make ſuch an alteration in our minds; but ſince that moment, Mr Wolmar appears to me quite another man, and I conſider him leſs in the light of a huſband to her whom I have ſo long adored, as in that of the father of two children for whom I would lay down my life.

I was going to walk round the baſon, in order to draw nearer to this delightful aſylum, and its little inhabitants; but Mrs Wolmar checked me. Nobody, ſays ſhe, goes to diſturb them in their dwelling, and you are the firſt of our gueſts whom I ever brought ſo far. There are four keys to this orchard, of which my father and we have each of us one: Fanny has the fourth, as ſuperintendant, and to bring the children here now and then; the value of which favour is greatly inhanced by the extreme circum-

circumſpection which is required of them while they are here. Even Guſtin never comes hither without one of the four: when the two ſpring months are over in which his labours are uſeful, he ſcarce ever comes hither afterwards, and all the reſt we do ourſelves. Thus, ſaid, I for fear of making your birds ſlaves to you, you make yourſelves ſlaves to your birds. This, ſhe replied, is exactly the ſentiment of a tyrant, who never thinks that he enjoys liberty, but while he is diſturbing the freedom of others.

As we were coming back, Mr Wolmar threw a handful of barley into the baſon, and on looking into it, I perceived ſome little fiſh. Ah, ah, ſaid I, immediately, here are ſome priſoners nevertheleſs. Yes, ſaid he, they are priſoners of war, who have had their lives ſpared. Without doubt, added his wife. Some time ſince Fanny ſtole two perch out of the kitchen, and brought them hither without my knowledge. I leave them here, for fear of offending her if I ſent them to the lake; for it is better to confine the fiſh in too narrow a compaſs, than to diſoblige a worthy creature. You are in the right, ſaid I, and the fiſh are not much to be pitied for having eſcaped from the frying-pan into the water.

Well, how does it appear to you? ſaid ſhe, as we were coming back; are you got to the end of the world yet? No, I replied, I am quite out of the world, and you have in truth tranſported me into elyſium. The pompous name ſhe has given this orchard, ſaid Mr Wolmar, very well deſerves that raillery. Be modeſt in your commendation of childiſh amuſements, and be

aſſured

assured that they have never intrenched on the concerns of the mistress of a family. I know it, I am sure of it; I replied, and childish amusements please me more in this way than the labours of men.

Still there is one thing here, I continued, which I cannot conceive: which is, that tho' a place so different from what it was, can never have been altered to its present state, but by great care and culture; yet I can no where discover the least trace of cultivation. Every thing is verdant, fresh, and vigorous, and the hand of the gardener is no where to be discerned: nothing contradicts the idea of a desart island, which struck me at my first entrance, and I cannot perceive any footsteps of men. Oh, said Mr Wolmar, it is because they have taken great pains to efface them. I have frequently been witness to, and sometimes an accomplice in, this roguery. They sow all the cultivated spots with grass, which presently hides all appearance of culture. In the winter, they cover all the dry and barren spots with some lays of manure, the manure eats up the moss, revives the grass and the plants; the trees themselves do not fare the worse, and in the summer there is nothing of it to be seen. With regard to the moss which covers some of the walks, Lord B—— sent us the secret of making it grow from England. These two sides, he continued, were inclosed with walls; the walls have been covered, not with hedges, but with thick trees, which make the boundaries of the place appear like the beginning of a wood. The two other sides are secured by strong thickset hedges well stocked with

with maple, hawthorn, holy-oak, privet, and other ſmall trees, which deſtroy the appearance of the hedges, and make them look more like coppice-woods. You ſee nothing here in an exact row, nothing level; the line never entered this place; nature plants nothing by the line; the affected irregularity of the winding walks are managed with art, in order to prolong the walk, to hide the boundaries of the iſland, and to enlarge its extent in appearance, without making inconvenient and too frequent turnings *.

Upon conſidering the whole, I thought it ſomewhat extraordinary that they ſhould take ſo much pains to conceal the labour they had been at; would it not have been better to have taken no ſuch pains? Notwithſtanding all we have told you, replied Julia, you judge of the labour from its effect, and you deceive yourſelf. All that you ſee are wild and vigorous plants, which need only to be put into the earth, and which afterwards ſpring up of themſelves. Beſides, nature ſeems deſirous of hiding her real charms from the ſight of men, becauſe they are too little ſenſible of them, and diſfigure them when they are within their reach; ſhe flies from public places; it is on the tops of mountains, in the midſt of foreſts, in deſart iſlands, that ſhe diſplays her moſt affecting charms. They who are in love with her, and cannot go ſo far in purſuit of her, are forced to do her vio-

* Like thoſe faſhionable little woods, ſo ridulouſly twiſted, that you are obliged to walk in a zigzag manner, and to make a *pirouette* at every ſtep.

violence, by obliging her, in ſome meaſure, to come and dwell with them, and all this cannot be effected without ſome degree of illuſion.

At theſe words, I was ſtruck with an idea which made them laugh. I am ſuppoſing to myſelf, ſaid I, ſome rich man to be maſter of this houſe, and to bring an architect who is paid an extravagant price for ſpoiling nature. With what diſdain would he enter this plain and ſimple ſpot! With what contempt would he order the ragged plants to be torn up! What fine lines he would draw! What fine walks he would cut! What fine geeſe-feet, what fine trees in the ſhape of umbrellos and fans he would make! What fine arbor-work—nicely cut out! What beautiful graſs-plots of fine Engliſh turf, round, ſquare, ſloping, oval! What fine yew-trees cut in the ſhape of dragons, pagods, marmoſets, and all ſorts of monſters! With what fine vaſes of braſs, with what fine fruit in ſtone he would decorate his garden *! .... When he had done all this, ſaid Mr Wolmar, he would have made a very fine place, which would ſcarce ever be frequented, and from whence one ſhould always go with eagerneſs to enjoy the country; a diſmal place where nobody would walk, but only uſe it as a thoroughfare when they were ſetting out; whereas, in my rural rambles, I often make haſte to return, that I may walk here. I ſee

* I am perſuaded, that ſome time hence gardens will be furniſhed with nothing belonging to the country; neither plants nor trees will be ſuffered to grow in them: we ſhall ſee nothing but porcelain flowers, baboons, arbor-work, gravel of all colours, and fine vaſes with nothing in them.

ſee nothing in thoſe extenſive grounds ſo laviſhly ornamented, but the vanity of the proprietor and of the artiſt, who being eager to diſplay, the one his riches and the other his talents, only contribute, at a vaſt expence, to tire thoſe who would enjoy their works. A falſe taſte of grandeur, which was never deſigned for man, poiſons all his pleaſures. An air of greatneſs has always ſomething melancholy in it; it leads us to conſider the wretchedneſs of thoſe who affect it. In the midſt of theſe graſs-plots and fine walks, the little individual does not grow greater; a tree twenty feet high will ſhelter him as well as one of ſixty *; he never occupies a ſpace of more than three feet, and in the midſt of his immenſe poſſeſſions is loſt like a poor worm.

There is another taſte directly oppoſite to this, and ſtill more ridiculous, becauſe it does not allow us the pleaſure of walking, for which gardens were intended. I underſtand you, ſaid I; you allude to thoſe petty virtuoſi, who die away at the ſight of a ranunculus, and fall proſtrate before a tulip. Hereupon, my Lord, I gave them an account of what happened to me formerly

* He might have enlarged on the bad taſte of lopping trees in ſuch a ridiculous manner, to make them ſhoot into the clouds, by taking off their fine tops, by draining the ſap, and preventing their thriving. This method, it is true, ſupplies the gardeners with wood, but it robs the kingdom of it, which is not overſtocked already. One would imagine that nature was different in France, from what it is in any other part of the world, they take ſo much pains to diſfigure her. The parks are planted with nothing but long poles; they are like ſo many foreſts of maſts, and you walk in the midſt of woods without finding any ſhelter.

formerly at London in the flower-garden into which we were introduced with ſo much ceremony, and where we ſaw all the treaſures of Holland diſplayed with ſo much luſtre upon four beds of dung. I did not forget the ceremony of the umbrello and the little rod with which they honoured me, unworthy as I was, as well as the reſt of the ſpectators. I modeſtly acknowledged how, by endeavouring to appear a virtuoſo in my turn, and venturing to fall in ecſtaſies at the ſight of a tulip which ſeemed to be of a fine ſhape and of a lively colour, I was mocked, hooted at, and hiſſed by all the connoiſſeurs; and how the floriſt, who deſpiſed the flower, deſpiſed its panegyriſt likewiſe to that degree, that he did not even deign to look at me all the time we were together. I added, that I ſuppoſed he highly regretted having proſtituted his rod and umbrello on one ſo unworthy.

This taſte, ſaid Mr Wolmar, when it degenerates into a paſſion, has ſomething idle and little in it, which renders it puerile and ridiculouſly expenſive. The other, at leaſt, is noble, grand, and has ſomething real in it. But what is the value of a curious root which an inſect gnaws and ſpoils perhaps as ſoon as it is purchaſed, or of a flower which is beautiful at noonday, and fades before ſun-ſet? what ſignifies a mere imaginary beauty, which is only obvious to the eyes of virtuoſi, and which is a beauty only becauſe they will have it to be ſo? The time will come when they will require different kinds of beauty in flowers, from that which they ſeek after at preſent, and with as good reaſon; then

then you will be the connoiſſeur in your turn, and your virtuoſo will appear ignorant. All theſe trifling attentions, which degenerate into a kind of ſtudy, are unbecoming a rational being, who would keep his body in moderate exerciſe, or relieve his mind by amuſing himſelf in a walk with his friends. Flowers were made to delight our eyes as we paſs along, and not to be ſo curiouſly anatomiſed *. See the queen of them ſhine in every part of the orchard. It perfumes the air, it raviſhes the eyes, and coſts neither care nor culture. It is for this reaſon that floriſts deſpiſe it; nature has made it ſo lovely, that they cannot add to it in any borrowed beauty; and as they cannot plague themſelves with cultivating it, they find nothing in it which flatters their fancy. The miſtake of your pretenders to taſte is, that they are deſirous of introducing art in every thing, and are never ſatisfied unleſs the art appears; whereas true taſte conſiſts in concealing it, eſpecially when it concerns any of the works of nature. To what purpoſe are thoſe ſtrait gravelled walks which we meet with continually; and thoſe ſtars which are ſo far from making a park appear more extenſive to the view, as is commonly ſuppoſed, that they only contribute aukwardly to diſcover its boundaries? Do you ever ſee fine gravel in woods, or is that kind of gravel ſofter to the feet than moſs or down? Does nature conſtantly make uſe of

* The ſagacious Wolmar had not ſufficiently reflected. Was he, who was ſo ſkilful in judging of men, ſo bad a judge of nature? Did he not know, that if the author of nature diſplays his greatneſs in great things, he appears ſtill greater in theſe which are the leaſt?

the ſquare or rule? Are they afraid leſt ſhe ſhould be viſible in ſome ſpots, notwithſtanding all their care to disfigure her? Upon the whole, it is droll enough to ſee them affect to walk in a ſtraight line, that they may ſooner reach the end, as if they were tired of walking, before they have well begun? Would not one imagine, by their taking the ſhorteſt cut, that they were going a journey inſtead of a walk, and that they were in a hurry to get out as ſoon as they come in?

How will a man of taſte act, who lives to reliſh life, who knows how to enjoy himſelf, who purſues real and ſimple pleaſures, and who is inclined to make a walk before his houſe? He will make it ſo convenient and agreeable, that he may enjoy it every hour of the day; and yet ſo natural and ſimple, that it will ſeem as if he had done nothing. He will introduce water, and will make the walk verdant, cool, and ſhady; for nature herſelf unites theſe properties. He will beſtow no attention on ſymmetry, which is the bane of nature and variety, and the walks of gardens in general are ſo like each other, that we always fancy ourſelves in the ſame. He will make the ground ſmooth, in order to walk more conveniently; but the two ſides of his walks will not be exactly parallel; their direction will not always be recti-lineal; they will be ſomewhat irregular, like the ſteps of an indolent man, who ſaunters in his walk. He will not be anxious about opening diſtant perſpectives. The taſte for perſpective and diſtant views proceeds from the diſpoſition of men in general, who are never ſatisfied with the place where they are.

They

They are always deſirous of what is diſtant from them; and the artiſt who cannot make them contented with the objects around them, flies to this reſource to amuſe them; but ſuch a man as I ſpeak of, is under no ſuch inquietudes; when he is agreeably fixed, he does not deſire to be elſewhere. Here, for example, we have no proſpect, and we are very well ſatisfied without any. We are willing to think that all the charms of nature are incloſed here, and I ſhould be very much afraid leſt a diſtant view ſhould take off a good deal of the beauty from this walk. *. Certainly he who would not chuſe to paſs his days in this ſimple and pleaſant place, is not maſter of true taſte or of a vigorous mind. I confeſs that one ought not to make a parade of bringing ſtrangers hither; but then we can enjoy it ourſelves, without ſhewing it to any one.

Sir, ſaid I, thoſe rich people who have ſuch fine gardens, have very good reaſons for not chuſing to walk alone, or to be in company with

* I do not know whether there has ever been an attempt to give a ſlight curve to theſe long walks, that the eye may not be able to reach the end of the walk, and that the oppoſite extremity may be hid from the ſpectator. It is true the beauty of the proſpects in perſpective would be loſt by theſe means; but proprietors would reap one advantage which they generally prize at a high rate, which is that of making their grounds more extenſive in appearance, and in the midſt of a ſtarry plot thus bounded, one might think himſelf in a vaſt park. I am perſuaded that the walk would be leſs tireſome, though more ſolitary; for whatever gives play to the imagination, excites ideas, and nouriſhes the mind: but gardeners are people who have no idea of theſe things. How often in a rural ſpot, would the pencil drop from their hands, as it did from Le Noſtre's in St James's park, if they knew like him what gave life to nature, and intereſted the beholder?

themſelves only; therefore they are in the right to lay them out for the pleaſure of others. Beſides, I have ſeen gardens in China, made after your taſte, and laid out with ſo much art, that the art was not ſeen; but in ſuch a coſtly manner, and kept up at ſuch a vaſt expence, that that ſingle idea deſtroyed all the pleaſure I had in viewing them. There were rocks, grottos, and artificial caſcades, in level and ſandy places, where there was nothing but ſpring-water; there were flowers and curious plants of all the climates in China and Tartary, collected and cultivated in the ſame ſoil. It is true, there were no fine walks or regular compartments; but you might ſee curioſities heaped together with profuſion, which in nature are only to be found ſeparate and ſcattered. Nature was there repreſented under a thouſand various forms, and yet the whole taken together was not natural. Here neither earth nor ſtones are tranſplanted, you have neither pumps nor reſervoirs, you have no occaſion for green-houſes, or ſtoves, or bell-glaſſes, or ſtraw-beds. A plain ſpot of ground has been improved by a few ſimple ornaments. A few common herbs and trees, and a few purling ſtreams, which flow without pomp or conſtraint, have contributed to embelliſh it. It is an amuſement which has coſt little trouble, and the ſimplicity of it is an additional pleaſure to the beholder.

I can conceive that this place might be made ſtill more agreeable, and yet be infinitely leſs pleaſing to me. Such, for example, is Lord Cobham's celebrated park at Stow. It conſiſts of places extremely beautiful and pictureſque; mo-

modelled after the faſhion of different countries, and in which every thing appears natural except their conjunction, as in the gardens of China, which I juſt now mentioned. The proprietor who made this ſtately ſolitude, has even erected ruins, temples, old buildings, and different ages as well as different places are collected with more than mortal magnificence. This is the very thing I diſlike. I would have the amuſements of mankind carry an air of eaſe with them which does not put one in mind of their weakneſs; and that while we admire theſe curioſities, our imagination may not be diſturbed by reflecting on the vaſt ſums of money and labour they have coſt. Are we not deſtined to trouble enough, without throwing fatigue into our very amuſements?

I have but one objection, added I, looking at Julia, to make to your elyſium, but which you will probably think of ſome weight, which is, that it is a ſuperfluous amuſement. To what purpoſe was it to make a new walk, when you have ſuch beautiful groves on the other ſide of the houſe which you neglect? That is true, ſaid ſhe, ſomewhat diſconcerted, but I like this better. If you had thoroughly reflected on the propriety of your queſtion before you had made it, ſaid Mr Wolmar, interrupting us, it might be imputed to you as more than an indiſcretion. My wife has never ſet her foot in thoſe groves ſince ſhe has been married. I know the reaſon, though ſhe has always kept it a ſecret from me. You who are no ſtranger to it, learn to reſpect the ſpot where you are; it has been planted by the hands of virtue.

I had ſcarce received this juſt reprimand, when the little family, led by Fanny, came in as we were going out. Theſe three lovely children ran and embraced their parents; I likewiſe ſhared their little careſſes. Julia and I returned into the elyſium to take a little turn with them; and afterwards went to join Mr Wolmar, who was talking to ſome workmen. In our way, ſhe told me, that ſhe no ſooner became a mother, than an idea ſtruck into her mind, with reſpect to that walk, which increaſed her zeal for embelliſhing it. I had an eye, ſaid ſhe, to the health and amuſement of my children as they grew up. It requires more care than labour to keep up this place; it is more eſſential to give a certain turn to the branches of the plants, than to dig and cultivate the ground; I intend one day to make gardeners of my little ones: they ſhall have ſufficient exerciſe to ſtrengthen their conſtitution, and not enough to enfeeble it. Beſides, what is too much for their age, ſhall be done by others, and they ſhall confine themſelves to ſuch little works as may amuſe them. I cannot deſcribe, ſays ſhe, what pleaſure I enjoy in imagining my infants buſy in returning thoſe little attentions which I now beſtow on them with ſuch ſatisfaction, and the joy of which their tender hearts will be ſuſceptible, when they ſee their mother walking with delight under the ſhades which have been formed by their own hands. In truth, my friend, ſaid ſhe, with an affecting tone, time thus ſpent is an emblem of the felicity of the next world, and it was not without reaſon that, reflecting on theſe ſcenes, I

chriſt-

chriſtened this place beforehand by the name of Elyſium.

My Lord, this incomparable woman is as amiable in the character of a mother as in that of a wife, a friend, a daughter, and to the eternal puniſhment of my ſoul, ſhe was thus lovely when my miſtreſs.

Tranſported with this delightful place, I intreated them in the evening to conſent that, during my ſtay, Fanny ſhould entruſt me with her key, and conſign to me the office of feeding the birds. Julia immediately ſent a ſack of grain to my chamber, and gave me her own key. I cannot tell for what reaſon, but I accepted it with a kind of concern, and it ſeemed as if Mr Wolmar's would have been more acceptable to me.

In the morning I roſe early, and, with all the eagerneſs of a child, went to lock myſelf in the deſart iſland. What agreeable ideas did I hope to carry with me into that ſolitary place, where the mild aſpect of nature alone was ſufficient to baniſh from my remembrance all that new-coined ſyſtem which had made me ſo miſerable! Every object around me will be the work of her whom I adore. In every thing about me, I ſhall behold her image; I ſhall ſee nothing which her hand has not touched; I ſhall kiſs the flowers which have been her carpet; I ſhall inhale, with the morning dew, the air which ſhe has breathed; the taſte ſhe has diſplayed in her amuſement will bring all her charms preſent to my imagination, and in every thing ſhe will appear the Julia of my ſoul.

As I entered elyſium with this temper of mind, I ſud-

I ſuddenly recollected the laſt word which Mr Wolmar ſaid to me yeſterday very near the ſame ſpot. The recollection of that ſingle word, inſtantly changed my whole frame of mind. I thought that I beheld the image of virtue, where I expected to find that of pleaſure. That image intruded on my imagination with the charms of Mrs Wolmar, and for the firſt time ſince my return I ſaw Julia in her abſence; not ſuch as ſhe appeared to me formerly, and as I ſtill love to repreſent her, but ſuch as ſhe appears to my eyes every day. My Lord, I imagined that I beheld that amiable, that chaſte, that virtuous woman, in the midſt of the train which ſurrounded her yeſterday. I ſaw thoſe three lovely children, thoſe honourable and precious pledges of conjugal union and tender friendſhip, play about her, and give and receive a thouſand affecting careſſes. At her ſide, I beheld the grave Wolmar, that huſband ſo beloved, and ſo worthy of his happineſs. I imagined that I could perceive his judicious and penetrating eye pierce to the very bottom of my ſoul, and make me bluſh again; I fancied that I heard him utter reproaches which I too well deſerved, and repeat lectures to which I had attended in vain. Laſt in her train I ſaw Fanny Regnard, a lively inſtance of the triumph of virtue and humanity over the moſt ardent paſſion. Ah! what guilty thought could reach ſo far as her, through ſuch an impervious guard? With what indignation I ſuppreſſed the ſhameful tranſports of a criminal and ſcarce extinguiſhed paſſion! and how I ſhould have deſpiſed myſelf had I contaminated with a ſingle ſigh ſuch a raviſhing

ſcene

ſcene of honour and innocence! I recalled to mind the reflections ſhe made as we were going out; then my imagination attending her into that futurity on which ſhe delights to contemplate, I ſaw that affectionate mother wipe the ſweat from her childrens foreheads, kiſs their ruddy cheeks, and devote that heart, which was formed for love, to the moſt tender ſentiments of nature. There was nothing, even to the very name of elyſium, but what contributed to rectify my rambling imagination, and to inſpire my ſoul with a calm far preferable to the agitation of the moſt ſeductive paſſions. The word Elyſium ſeemed to me an emblem of the purity of her mind who adopted it; and I concluded that ſhe would never have made choice of that name, had ſhe been tormented with a troubled conſcience. Peace, ſaid I, reigns in the inmoſt receſſes of her ſoul, as in this aſylum which ſhe has named.

I had propoſed to myſelf an agreeable reverie, and my reflections there were more agreeable even than I expected. I paſſed two hours in elyſium, which were not inferior to any time I ever ſpent. In obſerving with what rapidity and delight they paſſed away, I perceived that there was a kind of felicity in meditating on honeſt reflections, which the wicked never know, and which conſiſts in being pleaſed with one's ſelf. If we were to reflect on this without prejudice, I do not know any other pleaſure can equal it. I perceive, at leaſt, that one who loves ſolitude as I do, ought to be extremely cautious not to do any thing which may make it tormenting. Perhaps theſe principles may lead

lead us to diſcover the ſpring of the falſe judgment of mankind with regard to vice and virtue; for the enjoyment of virtue is all internal, and is only perceived by him who feels it: but all the advantages of vice ſtrike the imagination of others, and only he who has purchaſed them know what they coſt.

Se a ciaſcun l' interno affanno
Si legeſſe in fronte ſcritto,
Quanti mai, che invidia fanno
Ci farebbero pieta? *

The aching heart and ſmiling face
Thus may our envy move,
Which, did we know the wretched's caſe,
Would our compaſſion prove.

As it grew late before I perceived it, Mr Wolmar came to join me, and acquaint me that Julia and the tea waited for me. It is you yourſelves, ſaid I, making an apology, who prevented my coming ſooner: I was ſo delighted with the evening I ſpent yeſterday, that I went thither again to enjoy this morning: luckily there

* He might have added the concluſion, which is very fine, and no leſs appoſite to the ſubject.

Si vedria che i lor nemici
Anno in ſeno, e ſi reduce
Nel parere a noi felici
Ogni lor felicita.

So when, reduc'd or bent with years,
Poor mortals ſigh for reſt,
Each, wretched as he yet appears,
With ſomething ſtill is bleſt.

there is no harm done; and as you have waited for me, my morning is not loſt. That is true, ſaid Mr Wolmar; it would be better to wait till noon, than loſe the pleaſure of breakfaſting together. Strangers are never admitted into my room in the morning, but breakfaſt in their own. Breakfaſt is the repaſt of intimates; ſervants are excluded, and impertinents never appear at that time: we then declare all we think, we reveal all our ſecrets, we diſguiſe none of our ſentiments; we can then enjoy the delights of intimacy and confidence, without indiſcretion. It is almoſt the only time in which we are allowed to appear what we really are; why cannot it laſt the day through! Ah, Julia! I was ready to ſay; this is an intereſting wiſh! but I was ſilent. The firſt thing I learned to ſuppreſs with my love, was flattery. To praiſe people to their face, unleſs indeed it be one's miſtreſs, is but to tax them with vanity. You know, my Lord, whether Mrs Wolmar deſerves this reproach. No; I reſpect her too much, not to reſpect her in ſilence. Is it not a ſufficient commendation of her, to liſten to her, and obſerve her conduct?

LETTER CXXXI.

Mrs WOLMAR *to Mrs* ORBE.

MY dear friend, is it not decreed that you are on all occaſions to be my ſafeguard againſt myſelf? and that after having delivered me with ſo much difficulty from the ſnares which my

my affections laid for me, you are yet to reſcue me from thoſe which reaſon ſpreads out? After ſo many cruel inſtances, I have learned to guard againſt miſtakes, as much as againſt my paſſions, which are frequently the cauſe of them. Why had I not always the ſame precaution! If in time paſt, I had relied leſs on the light of my own underſtanding, I ſhould have had leſs reaſon to bluſh at my ſentiments.

But let not this preamble alarm you. I ſhould be unworthy your friendſhip, if I was ſtill under a neceſſity of conſulting you upon diſmal ſubjects. Guilt was always a ſtranger to my heart, and I dare believe it to be more diſtant from me now than ever. Therefore, Clara, attend to me patiently, and believe that I ſhall never need your advice in difficulties which honour alone can reſolve.

During theſe ſix years which I have lived with Mr Wolmar in the moſt perfect union which can ſubſiſt between a married couple, you know that he never talked to me either about his family or himſelf; and that having received him from a father as ſolicitous for his daughter's happineſs as jealous of the honour of his family, I never expreſſed any eagerneſs to know more of his concerns than he thought proper to communicate. Satisfied with being indebted to him for my honour, my repoſe, my reaſon, my children, and all that can render me eſtimable in my own eyes, beſides the life of him who gave me being, I was convinced that the particulars concerning him, to which I was a ſtranger, would not falſify what I knew of him, and there was no occaſion for my knowing more, in order

order to love, eſteem, and honour him as much as poſſible.

This morning at breakfaſt he propoſed our taking a little walk before the heat of the day came on; then under a pretence of not going through the country in a morning diſhabille, as he ſaid, he led us into the woods, and exactly into that wood where all the misfortunes of my life commenced. In approaching that fatal ſpot, I felt a violent palpitation of heart, and ſhould have refuſed to have gone in, if ſhame had not checked me, and if the recollection of a word which dropped the other day in elyſium, had not made me dread the interpretations which might have been paſſed on ſuch a refuſal. I do not know whether the philoſopher was more compoſed; but ſometime after, having caſt my eyes upon him by chance, I found his countenance pale and altered, and I cannot expreſs to you the uneaſineſs it gave me.

On entering into the wood, I perceived my huſband caſt a glance towards me, and ſmile. He ſat down between us, and after a moment's pauſe, taking us both by the hand, My dear children, ſaid he, I begin to perceive that my ſchemes will not be fruitleſs, and that we three may be connected by a laſting attachment, capable of promoting our common good, and procuring me ſome comfort to alleviate the troubles of approaching old age: but I am better acquainted with you two, than you are with me: it is but juſt to make every thing equal among us; and though I have nothing very intereſting to impart, yet as you have no ſecrets hidden

from me, neither will I have any concealed from you.

He then revealed to us the myſtery of his birth, which had hitherto been known to no one but my father. When you are acquainted with it, you will imagine what great temper and moderation a man muſt be maſter of, who was able to conceal ſuch a ſecret from his wife, during ſix years; but it is no pain to him to keep ſuch a ſecret, and he thinks too ſlightly of it, to be obliged to exert any vaſt efforts to conceal it.

I will not detain you, ſaid he, with relating the occurrences of my life. It is of leſs importance to you to be acquainted with my adventures than with my character. The former are ſimple in their nature like the latter; and when you know what I am, you will eaſily imagine what I was capable of doing. My mind is naturally calm, and my affections temperate. I am one of theſe men, whom people think they reproach when they call them inſenſible; that is, when they upbraid them with having no paſſion, which may impel them to ſwerve from the true direction of human nature. Being but little ſuſceptible of pleaſure or grief, I receive but faint impreſſions from thoſe intereſting ſentiments of humanity, which make the affections of others our own. If I feel uneaſineſs when I ſee the worthy in diſtreſs, it is not without reaſon that my compaſſion is moved; for when I ſee the wicked ſuffer, I have no pity for them. My only active principle is a natural love of order, and the concurrence of the accidents of fortune with the conduct of mankind well combined together,

gether, pleaſes me exactly like beautiful ſymmetry in a picture, or like a piece well repreſented on the ſtage. If I have any ruling paſſion, it is that of obſervation: I love to read the hearts of mankind. As my own ſeldom miſleads me, as I make my obſervations with a diſintereſted and diſpaſſionate temper, and as I have acquired ſome ſagacity by long experience, I am ſeldom deceived in my judgment: this advantage therefore is the only recompenſe which ſelf-love receives from my conſtant ſtudies; for I am not fond of acting a part, but only of obſerving others. Society is agreeable to me for the ſake of contemplation, and not as a member of it. If I could alter the nature of my being, and become a living eye, I would willingly make the exchange. Therefore my indifference about mankind does not make me independent of them: without being ſolicitous to be ſeen, I want to ſee them, and though they are not dear to me, they are neceſſary.

The two firſt characters in ſociety which I had an opportunity of obſerving, were courtiers and valets; two orders of men who differ more in appearance than fact, but ſo little worthy of being attended to, and ſo eaſily read, that I was tired of them at firſt ſight. By quitting the court, where every thing is preſently ſeen, I ſecured myſelf, without knowing it, from the danger which threatened me, and which I ſhould have eſcaped. I changed my name; and having a deſire to be acquainted with military men, I ſolicited admiſſion into the ſervice of a foreign prince; it was there that I had the happineſs of being uſeful to your father, who was impelled

by deſpair for having killed his friend, to expoſe himſelf raſhly and contrary to his duty. The grateful and ſuſceptible heart of a brave officer began then to give me a better opinion of human nature. He attached himſelf to me with that zealous friendſhip which it was impoſſible for me not to return, and from that time we formed connections which have every day grown ſtronger. I diſcovered in this new ſtate of my mind, that intereſt is not always, as I had ſuppoſed, the ſole motive which influences human conduct, and that among the crowd of prejudices which are oppoſite to virtue, there are ſome likewiſe which are favourable to it. I found that the general character of mankind was founded on a kind of ſelf-love indifferent in itſelf, and either good or bad according to the accidents which modify it, and which depend on cuſtoms, laws, rank, fortune, and every circumſtance relative to human policy. I therefore indulged my inclination, and deſpiſing the vain notions of wordly condition, I ſucceſſively threw myſelf into all the different ſituations in life, which might enable me to compare them together, and know one by the other. I perceived (as you have obſerved in one of your letters, ſaid he to St Preux) that we ſee nothing if we reſt ſatisfied with looking on, that we ought to act ourſelves in order to judge of men's actions; and I made myſelf an actor, to qualify myſelf for a ſpectator. We can always lower ourſelves with eaſe; and I ſtooped to a variety of ſituations, which no man of my ſtation ever condeſcended to. I even became a peaſant; and when Julia made me her gardener, ſhe did not find me ſuch a no-

a novice in the buſineſs as ſhe might have expected.

Beſides gaining a thorough knowledge of mankind, which indolent philoſophy only attains in appearance, I found another advantage which I never expected. This was, the opportunity it afforded me of improving, by an active life, that love of order I derived from nature, and of acquiring a new reliſh for virtue by the pleaſure of contributing towards it. This ſentiment made me leſs ſpeculative; attached me ſomewhat more to myſelf; and from a natural conſequence of this progreſs, I perceived that I was alone. Solitude, which was always tireſome to me, became hideous, and I could not hope to eſcape it long. Though I did not grow leſs diſpaſſionate, I found the want of ſome connection; the idea of decay, without any one to comfort me, afflicted me by anticipation, and for the firſt time in my life I experienced melancholy and uneaſineſs. I communicated my troubles to the Baron d'Etange. You muſt not, ſaid he, grow an old batchelor. I myſelf, after having lived independent as it were, in a ſtate of matrimony, find that I have a deſire of returning to the duties of a huſband and a father, and I am going to repoſe myſelf in the midſt of my family. It depends on yourſelf to make my family your own, and to ſupply the place of the ſon whom I have loſt. I have an only daughter to marry; ſhe is not deſtitute of merit; ſhe has a ſenſibility of mind, and the love of her duty makes her love every thing relative to it. She is neither a beauty, nor a prodigy of underſtanding; but come and ſee her, and believe me, that if

ſhe does not affect you, no woman will ever make an impreſſion on you. I came, I ſaw you Julia, and found that your father had reported modeſtly of you. Your tranſports, the tears of joy you ſhed when you embraced him, gave me the firſt, or rather the only emotion I ever experienced in my life. If the impreſſion was ſlight, it was the only one I felt, and our ſenſations are ſtrong only in proportion to thoſe which oppoſe them. Three years abſence made no change in my inclinations. I was no ſtranger to the ſtate of yours on my return, and on this occaſion I muſt make you a return for the confeſſion which haſt coſt you ſo dear. Judge, my dear Clara, with what extraordinary ſurpriſe I learnt that all my ſecrets had been diſcovered to him before our marriage, and that he had wedded me, knowing me to be the property of another.

This conduct, continued Mr Wolmar, was unpardonable. I offended againſt delicacy; I ſinned againſt prudence; I expoſed your honour and my own; I ſhould have been apprehenſive of plunging you and myſelf into irretrievable calamities; but I loved you, and I loved nothing but you. Every thing elſe was indifferent to me. How is it poſſible to reſtrain a paſſion, be it ever ſo weak, when it has no counterpoiſe? This is the inconvenience of calm and diſpaſſionate tempers. Every thing goes right while their inſenſibility ſecures them from temptations; but if one happens to touch them, they are conquered as ſoon as they are attacked; and reaſon, which governs while ſhe ſways alone, has no power to reſiſt the ſlighteſt effort. I was tempted but once, and I gave way to it. If the

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intoxication of any other paſſion had rendered me wavering, I ſhould have fallen, every falſe ſtep I took; none but ſpirited ſouls are able to ſtruggle and conquer. All great efforts, all ſublime actions, are their province; cool reaſon never atchieved any thing illuſtrious, and we can only triumph over our paſſions by oppoſing one againſt another. When virtue gains the aſcendency, ſhe reigns alone, and keeps all in due poiſe: this forms the true philoſopher, who is as much expoſed to the aſſaults of paſſion as another, but who alone is capable of ſubduing them by their own force, as a pilot ſteers through adverſe winds.

You find that I do not attempt to extenuate my fault; had it been one, I ſhould infallibly have committed it; but I knew you, Julia, and was guilty of none when I married you. I perceived that all my proſpect of happineſs depended on you alone; and that if any one was capable of making you happy, it was myſelf. I knew that peace and innocence were eſſential to your mind, that the affection with which it was pre-engaged could not afford theſe, and that nothing could baniſh love but the horror of guilt. I ſaw that your ſoul laboured under an oppreſſion which it could not ſhake off but by ſome new ſtruggle; and that to make you ſenſible how valuable you ſtill were, was the only way to render you truly eſtimable.

Your heart was formed for love; I therefore ſlighted the diſproportion of age, which excluded me from a right of pretending to that affection, which he who was the object of it could not enjoy, and which it was impoſſible to obtain

tain for any other. On the contrary, finding my life half ſpent, and that I had been ſuſceptible but of a ſingle impreſſion, I concluded that it would be laſting, and I pleaſed myſelf with the thoughts of preſerving it the reſt of my days. In all my tedious ſearches, I found nothing ſo eſtimable as yourſelf; I thought that what you could not effect, no one in the world could accompliſh; I ventured to rely on your virtue, and I married you. The ſecrecy you obſerved, did not ſurpriſe me: I knew the reaſon; and from your prudent conduct, I gueſſed how long it would laſt. From a regard to you, I copied your reſerve; and I would not deprive you of the honour of one day making me a confeſſion, which, I plainly perceived, was at your tongue's end every minute. I have not been deceived in any particular; you have fully anſwered all I expected from you. When I made choice of a wife, I deſired to find in her an amiable, diſcreet, and happy companion. The firſt two requiſites have been obtained. I hope, my dear, that we ſhall not be diſappointed of the third.

At theſe words, in ſpite of all my endeavours not to interrupt him but by my tears, I could not forbear throwing myſelf round his neck, and crying out, "O my dear huſband! O thou "beſt and moſt amiable of men! Tell me what "is wanting to complete my happineſs, but to "promote your felicity, and to be more deſer-"ving."... You are as happy as you can be, ſaid he, interrupting me; you deſerve to be ſo; but it is time to enjoy that felicity in peace, which has hitherto coſt you ſuch vaſt pains. If

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your fidelity had been all I required, that would have been inſured the moment you made me the promiſe: I wanted, further, to make it eaſy and agreeable to you; and we have both laboured to this end in concert, without communicating our views to each other. Julia, we have ſucceeded; better than you imagine perhaps. The only fault I find in you is, that you do not reſume that confidence which you have a right to repoſe in yourſelf, and that you undervalue your own worth. Extreme diffidence is as dangerous as exceſſive confidence. As that raſhneſs which prompts us to attempts beyond our ſtrength, renders our power ineffectual; ſo that timidity which prevents us from relying on ourſelves, renders it uſeleſs. True prudence conſiſts in being thoroughly acquainted with the meaſure of our own power, and acting up to it. You have acquired an increaſe of ſtrength by changing your condition. You are no longer that unfortunate girl who bewailed the weakneſs ſhe indulged; you are the moſt virtuous of women; you are bound by no laws but thoſe of honour and duty; and the only fault that can now be imputed to you, is, that you retain too lively a ſenſe of your former indiſcretions. Inſtead of taking reproachful precautions againſt yourſelf, learn to depend upon yourſelf, and your confidence will increaſe your ſtrength. Baniſh that injurious diffidence, and think yourſelf happy in having made choice of an honeſt man at an age which is liable to impoſition, and in having entertained a lover formerly, whom you may now enjoy as a friend, even under your huſband's eye. I was no ſooner

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er made acquainted with your connections, than I judged of you by each other. I perceived what enthuſiaſtic deluſion led you aſtray; it never operates but on ſuſceptible minds; it ſometimes ruins them, but it is by a charm which has power to ſeduce them alone. I judged that the ſame turn of mind which formed your attachment would break it as ſoon as it became criminal; and that in ſuch hearts as yours vice might find an entrance, but never could take root.

I conceived moreover, that the connection between you ought not to be broken; that there were ſo many laudable circumſtances attending your mutual attachment, that it ought rather to be rectified than deſtroyed; and that neither of the two could forget the other, without diminiſhing their own worth. I knew that great ſtruggles only ſerved to inflame ſtrong paſſions; and that if violent efforts exerciſe the mind, they occaſion ſuch torments as by their continuance might ſubdue it. I took advantage of Julia's gentleneſs to moderate the ſeverity of her reflections. I nouriſhed her friendſhip for you, ſaid he to St Preux; I baniſhed all immoderate paſſion, and I believe that I have preſerved you a greater ſhare of her affections, than ſhe would have left you had I abandoned her entirely to herſelf.

My ſucceſs encouraged me; and I determined to attempt your cure, as I had accompliſhed her's: for I had an eſteem for you; and notwithſtanding the prejudices of vice, I have always obſerved that every good end is to be obtained from ſuſceptible minds by means of con-

fidence and ſincerity. I ſaw you, you did not deceive me; you will not deceive me; and tho' you are not yet what you ought to be, I find you more improved than you imagine, and I am better ſatisfied with you than you are with yourſelf. I know that my conduct has an extravagant appearance, and is repugnant to the common-received principles: but maxims become leſs general, in proportion as we are better acquainted with the human heart; and the huſband of Julia ought not to act like common men. My dear children, ſaid he, with a tone the more affecting as it came from a diſpaſſionate man, remain what you are, and we ſhall all be happy. Danger conſiſts chiefly in opinion; be not afraid of yourſelves, and you will have nothing to apprehend; only think on the preſent, and I will anſwer for the future. I cannot communicate any thing farther to-day; but if my ſchemes ſucceed, and my hopes do not betray me, our deſtiny will be better fulfilled, and you two will be much happier than if you had enjoyed each other.

As we roſe, he embraced us, and would have us likewiſe embrace each other, on that ſpot.... on that very ſpot where formerly ... Clara, O my dear Clara, how dearly have you ever loved me! I made no reſiſtance. Alas! How indiſcreet would it have been to have made any! This kiſs was nothing like that which rendered the grove terrible to me. I ſilently congratulated myſelf, and I found that my heart was more changed than I had hitherto ventured to imagine.

As we were walking towards home, my huſband,

band, taking me by the hand, ſtopt me, and ſhewing me the wood we had juſt left, he ſaid to me, ſmiling, "Julia, be no longer afraid of "this aſylum; it has not been lately profaned." You will not believe me, couſin, but I ſwear that he has ſome ſupernatural gift of reading one's inmoſt thoughts: may heaven continue it to him! Having ſuch reaſon to deſpiſe myſelf, it is certainly to this art that I am indebted for his indulgence.

You do not ſee yet any occaſion I have for your advice; patience, my angel! I am coming to that point; but the converſation which I have related, was neceſſary to clear up what follows.

On our return, my huſband, who has long been expected at Etange, told me that he propoſed going thither to-morrow, that he ſhould ſee you in his way, and that he ſhould ſtay there five or ſix days. Without ſaying all I thought concerning ſuch an ill-timed journey, I told him that I imagined the neceſſity was not ſo indiſpenſable as to oblige Mr Wolmar to leave his gueſt, whom he had himſelf invited to his houſe. Would you have me, he replied, uſe ceremony with him to remind him that he is not at home? I am like the Valaiſians for hoſpitality. I hope he will find their ſincerity here, and allow us to uſe their freedom. Perceiving that he would not underſtand me, I took another method, and endeavoured to perſuade our gueſt to take the journey with him. You will find a ſpot, ſaid I, which has its beauties, and ſuch as you are fond of; you will viſit my patrimony and that of my anceſtors; the intereſt you

you take in every thing which concerns me, will not allow me to ſuppoſe that ſuch a ſight can be indifferent to you. My mouth was open to add, that the caſtle was like that of Lord B——, —who . . . but luckily I had time to bite my tongue. He anſwered me coolly that I was in the right, and that he would do as I pleaſed. But Mr Wolmar, who ſeemed determined to drive me to an extremity, replied that he ſhould do what was moſt agreeable to himſelf. Which do you like beſt, to go or to ſtay? To ſtay, ſaid he, without heſitating. Well, ſtay then, rejoined my huſband, taking him by the hand: you are a ſincere and honeſt man, and I am well pleaſed with that declaration.

There was no room for much altercation between my huſband and me, in the hearing of this third perſon. I was ſilent; but could not conceal my uneaſineſs ſo well, but my huſband perceived it. What! ſaid he, with an air of diſcontent, St Preux being at a little diſtance from us, ſhall I have pleaded your cauſe againſt yourſelf in vain, and will Mrs Wolmar remain ſatisfied with a virtue which depends on opportunity? For my part, I am more nice: I will be indebted for the fidelity of my wife, to her affection, not to chance; and it is not enough that ſhe is conſtant, it wounds my delicacy to think that ſhe ſhould doubt her conſtancy.

At length, he took us into his cloſet, where I was extremely ſurpriſed to ſee him take from a drawer, along with the copies of ſome of our friend's correſpondences which I delivered to

him, the very original letters which I thought I had ſeen burned by B—— in my mother's room. Here, ſaid he to me, ſhewing them to us, are the pledges of my ſecurity; if they deceive me, it would be a folly to depend on any thing which concerns human nature. I conſign my wife and my honour in charge to her, who, when ſingle and ſeduced, preferred an act of benevolence, to a ſecure and private rendezvous. I truſt Julia, now that ſhe is a wife and a mother, to him who, when he had it in his power to gratify his deſires, yet knew how to reſpect Julia when ſingle, and a fond girl. If either of you think ſo meanly of yourſelves, as to ſuppoſe that I am in the wrong, ſay ſo, and I retract this inſtant. Couſin, do you think that one could eaſily venture to make anſwer to ſuch a ſpeech?

I nevertheleſs ſought an opportunity in the afternoon, of ſpeaking with my huſband in private; and without entering into reaſons which I was not at liberty to urge, I only intreated him to put off his journey for two days. My requeſt was granted immediately; and I employ the time, in ſending you this expreſs, and waiting for your anſwer, to know how I am to act.

I know that I need but deſire my huſband not to go at all, and he who never denied me any thing, will not refuſe me ſo ſlight a favour. But I perceive, my dear, that he takes a pleaſure in the confidence he repoſes in me; and I am afraid of loſing ſome part of his eſteem, if he ſhould ſuppoſe that I have occaſion for more reſerve than he allows me. I know likewiſe, that I need

I need but ſpeak a word to St Preux, and that he will accompany my huſband without heſitation; but what will my huſband think of the change? and can I take ſuch a ſtep without preſerving an air of authority over St Preux, which might ſeem to entitle him to ſome privileges in his turn? I am apprehenſive beſides, leſt he ſhould conclude from this precaution that I find it abſolutely neceſſary; and this ſtep which at firſt ſight appears moſt eaſy, is the moſt dangerous perhaps at the bottom. Upon the whole, however, I am not ignorant that no conſideration ſhould be put in competition with a real danger; but does this danger exiſt in fact? This is the very doubt which you muſt reſolve for me.

The more I examine the preſent ſtate of my mind, the more I find to encourage me. My heart is ſpotleſs, my conſcience calm, I have no ſymptoms of fear or uneaſineſs, and with reſpect to every thing which paſſes within me, my ſincerity before my huſband coſts me no trouble. Not but that certain involuntary recollections ſometimes occaſion tender emotions, from which I had rather be exempt: but theſe recollections are ſo far from being produced by the ſight of him who was the original cauſe of them, that they ſeem to be leſs frequent ſince his return; and however agreeable it is to me to ſee him, yet, I know not from what ſtrange humour, it is more agreeable to me to think of him. In a word, I find that I do not even require the aid of virtue in order to be compoſed in his preſence; and, excluſive of the horror of guilt, it would be

very difficult to revive thoſe ſentiments which virtue has extinguiſhed.

But is it ſufficient, my dear, that my heart encourages me, when reaſon ought to alarm me? I have forfeited the right of depending on my own ſtrength. Who will anſwer that my confidence, even now, is not an illuſion of vice? How ſhall I rely on thoſe ſentiments which have ſo often deceived me? Does not guilt always ſpring from that pride which prompts us to deſpiſe temptation; and when we defy thoſe dangers which have occaſioned our fall, does it not ſhew a diſpoſition to yield again to temptation?

Weigh all theſe circumſtances, my dear Clara; you will find, that though they may be trifling in themſelves, they are of ſufficient importance to merit attention, when you conſider the object they concern. Deliver me from the uncertainty into which they have thrown me. Shew me how I muſt behave in this critical conjuncture: for my paſt errors have affected my judgment, and render me diffident in deciding upon any thing. Whatever you may think of yourſelf, your mind, I am certain, is tranquil and compoſed; objects preſent themſelves to you ſuch as they are; but in mine, which is agitated like a troubled ſea, they are confounded and diſfigured. I no longer dare to depend upon any thing I ſee, or any thing I feel; and notwithſtanding ſo many years repentance, I perceive, with concern, that the weight of paſt failings is a burden we muſt bear to the end of our lives.

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LETTER CXXXII.

ANSWER.

POOR Julia! what torments you continually create, while you have ſo much reaſon to live at eaſe! All thy misfortunes come from thyſelf, O Iſrael! If you adhered to your own maxims; if, in point of ſentiment, you only hearkened to the voice within you, and your heart did but ſilence your reaſon; you would then without ſcruple truſt to that ſecurity it inſpires, and you would not conſtrain yourſelf againſt the teſtimony of your own heart, to dread a danger which can ariſe only from thence.

I underſtand you, I perfectly underſtand you, Julia: being more ſecure in yourſelf than you pretend to be, you have a mind to humble yourſelf on account of your paſt failings, under a pretence of preventing new ones: and your ſcruples are not ſo much precautions againſt the future, as a penance you impoſe upon yourſelf to atone for the indiſcretion which formerly ruined you. You compare the times: do you conſider? Compare ſituations likewiſe, and remember that I then reproved you for your confidence, as I now reprove you for your diffidence.

You are miſtaken, my dear; but nature does not alter ſo ſoon. If we can forget our ſituation for want of reflection, we ſee it in its true light when we take pains to conſider it, and we can no more conceal from ourſelves our virtues than our vices. Your gentleneſs and devotion have given you a turn for humility. Miſtruſt that

dangerous virtue which only excites ſelf-love, by making it centre in one point; and be aſſured, that the noble ſincerity of an upright mind, is greatly preferable to the pride of humility. If moderation is neceſſary in wiſdom, it is requiſite likewiſe in thoſe precautions it ſuggeſts, leſt a ſolicitude which is reproachful to virtue ſhould debaſe the mind, and, by keeping us in conſtant alarm, render a chimerical danger a real one. Do not you perceive, that after we have had a fall, we ſhould hold ourſelves upright; and that by leaning too much towards the ſide oppoſite, to that on which we fell, we are in danger of falling again? Couſin, you loved like Julia; now, like her, you are an extravagant devotee: I wiſh you may be more ſucceſsful in the latter, than you were in the former! In truth, if I was leſs acquainted with your natural timidity, your apprehenſions would be ſufficient to terrify me in my turn; and if I were ſo ſcrupulous, I might, from being alarmed for you, begin to tremble for myſelf.

Conſider farther, my dear friend; you whoſe ſyſtem of morality is as eaſy and natural as it is pure and honeſt, do not make conſtructions which are harſh and foreign to your character, with reſpect to your maxims concerning the ſeparation of the ſexes. I agree with you, that they ought not to live together, nor after the ſame manner: but conſider whether this important rule does not admit of many diſtinctions in point of practice; examine whether it ought to be applied indiſcriminately, and without exceptions, to married as well as to ſingle women, to ſociety in general as well as to particular connections,

nections, to buſineſs as well as to amuſements, and whether that honour and decency which inſpire theſe maxims, ought not ſometimes to regulate them? In well-governed countries, where the natural relations of things are attended to in matrimony, you would admit of aſſemblies where young perſons of both ſexes might ſee, be acquainted, and aſſociate with each other; but you prohibit them, with good reaſon, from holding any private intercourſe. But is not the caſe quite different with regard to married women and the mothers of families, who can have no intereſt, that is juſtifiable, in exhibiting themſelves in public; who are confined within doors by their domeſtic concerns; and who ſhould not be refuſed to do any thing at home which is becoming the miſtreſs of a family? I ſhould not like to ſee you in the cellars preſenting the wine for the merchants to taſte, nor to ſee you leave your children to ſettle accounts with a banker; but if an honeſt man ſhould come to viſit your huſband, or to tranſact ſome buſineſs with him, will you refuſe to entertain his gueſt in his abſence, and to do him the honours of the houſe for fear of being left alone with him? Trace this principle to its ſource, and it will explain all your maxims. Why do we ſuppoſe that women ought to live retired and apart from the men? Shall we do ſuch injuſtice to our ſex, as to account for it upon principles drawn from our weakneſs, and that it is only to avoid the danger of temptations? No, my dear, theſe unworthy apprehenſions do not become an honeſt woman, and the mother of a family, who is continually ſurrounded with objects which che-

riſh

riſh in her the ſentiments of honour, and who is devoted to the moſt reſpectable duties of human nature. It is nature herſelf which divides us from the men, by preſcribing to us different occupations; it is that amiable and timorous modeſty, which, without being immediately attentive to chaſtity, is nevertheleſs its ſureſt guardian; it is that cautious and affecting reſerve, which at one and the ſame time cheriſhing both deſire and reſpect in the hearts of men, ſerves as a kind of coquetry to virtue. This is the reaſon why even huſbands themſelves are not excepted out of this rule. This is the reaſon why the moſt diſcreet women generally maintain the greateſt aſcendancy over their huſbands; becauſe, by the help of this prudent reſerve, without ſhewing any caprice or non-compliance, they know, even in the embraces of the moſt tender union, how to keep them at a diſtance, and prevent their being cloyed with them. You will agree with me, that your maxims are too general not to admit of exceptions; and that not being founded on any rigorous duty, the ſame principle of decorum which eſtabliſhed them, may ſometimes juſtify our diſpenſing with them.

The circumſpection which you ground on your paſt failings, is injurious to your preſent condition; I will never pardon it to your heart, and I can ſcarce forgive it in your reaſon. How was it poſſible that the rampart which protects your perſon, could not ſecure you from ſuch an ignominious apprehenſion? How could my couſin, my ſiſter, my friend, my Julia, confound the indiſcretions of a girl of too much ſenſibility, with

with the infidelity of a guilty wife? Look around you, you will ſee nothing but what contributes to raiſe and ſupport your mind. Your huſband, who has ſuch confidence in you, and whoſe eſteem it becomes you to juſtify; your children, whom you would train to virtue, and who will one day deem it an honour that you was their mother; your venerable father, who is ſo dear to you, who enjoys your felicity, and who derives more luſtre from you than from his anceſtors; your friend, whoſe fate depends on yours, and to whom you muſt be accountable for a reformation to which ſhe has contributed; her daughter, to whom you ought to ſet an example of thoſe virtues which you would excite in her; your philoſopher, who is a hundred times fonder of your virtues than of your perſon, and who reſpects you ſtill more than you apprehend; laſtly, yourſelf, who are ſenſible what painful efforts your diſcretion has coſt you, and who will ſurely never forfeit the fruit of ſo much trouble in a ſingle moment; how many motives capable of inſpiring you with courage, conſpire to make you aſhamed of having ventured to miſtruſt yourſelf? But in order to anſwer for my Julia, what occaſion have I to conſider what ſhe is? It is enough that I know what ſhe was during the indiſcretions which ſhe bewails. Ah! if your heart had ever been capable of infidelity, I would allow you to be continually apprehenſive; but at the very time when you imagined that you viewed it at a diſtance, you may conceive the horror its real exiſtence would have occaſioned you, by what you felt at that time,

time, when but to imagine it, had been to have committed it.

I remember with what aſtoniſhment we learnt that there was a nation where the weakneſs of a fond maid is conſidered as an inexpiable crime, though the adultery of a married woman is there ſoftened by the gentle term of gallantry, and where married women publickly make themſelves amends for the ſhort-lived reſtraint they undergo when ſingle. I know what maxims, in this reſpect, prevail in high life, where virtue paſſes for nothing, where every thing is empty appearance, where crimes are effaced by the difficulty of proving them, or where the proof itſelf becomes ridiculous againſt cuſtom. But you, Julia, you who glowed with a pure and conſtant paſſion, who was guilty only in the eyes of men, and between heaven and yourſelf was open to no reproach; you, who made yourſelf reſpected in the midſt of your indiſcretions; you, who being abandoned to fruitleſs regret, obliged us even to adore thoſe virtues which you had forfeited; you, who had diſdained to endure ſelf-contempt, when every thing ſeemed to plead in your excuſe; can you be apprehenſive of guilt, after having paid ſo dearly for your weakneſs? Will you dare to be afraid that you have leſs power now, than you had in thoſe days which coſt you ſo many tears? No, my dear, your former indiſcretions, inſtead of cauſing any alarm ought to inſpire you with courage: a repentance ſo ſevere does not lead to remorſe; and whoever is ſo ſuſceptible of ſhame, is incapable of braving infamy.

If ever a weak mind had ſupports againſt its weak-

weakneſs, they are ſuch as uphold you; if ever a vigorous mind was capable of ſupporting itſelf, what prop can yours require? Tell me, what reaſonable grounds there can be for your apprehenſions? All your life has been a continual ſtruggle, in which, even after your defeat honour and duty never ceaſed oppoſition, and at length came off victorious. Ah! Julia! ſhall I believe, that after ſo much pain and torment, after twelve years paſſed in tears, and ſix ſpent glorioufly, that you ſtill dread a trial of eight days? In few words, deal ſincerely with yourſelf: if there be really any danger, ſave your perſon, and bluſh at the condition of your heart; if there is no danger, it is an offence to your reaſon, it is a diſhonour to your virtue, to be apprehenſive of perils which can never affect it. Do you not know that there are ſome ſcandalous temptations which never approach noble minds; that it is even ſhameful to be under a neceſſity of ſubduing them; and that to take precautions againſt them, is not ſo much to humble, as to debaſe ourſelves.

I do not preſume to give you my arguments as unanſwerable, but only to convince you that yours may be controverted, and that is ſufficient to warrant my advice. Do not depend on yourſelf, for you do not know how to do yourſelf juſtice; nor on me, who even in your indiſcretions never conſidered any thing but your heart, and always adored you; but refer to your huſband, who ſees you ſuch as you are, and judges of you exactly according to your worth. Being, like all people of ſenſibility, ready to judge ill of thoſe who appear inſenſible, I miſtruſt-

truſted his power of penetration into the ſecrets of ſuſceptible minds; but ſince the arrival of our traveller, I find by his letters that he reads yours perfectly well, and that there is not a ſingle emotion which eſcapes his obſervation. I find his remarks ſo juſt and acute, that I have almoſt changed my opinion to the other extreme; and I ſhall readily believe that your diſpaſſionate people, who conſult their eyes more than their hearts, judge better of other mens paſſions, than your impetuous, lively, and vain perſons like myſelf, who always begin by ſuppoſing themſelves in another's place, and can never ſee any thing but what they feel. However it be, Mr Wolmar is thoroughly acquainted with you, he eſteems you, he loves you, and his deſtiny is blended with yours. What does he require, but that you would leave him to the entire direction of your conduct, with which you are afraid to truſt yourſelf? Perhaps, finding old age coming on, he is deſirous, by ſome trials on which he may depend, to prevent thoſe uneaſy jealouſies, which an old huſband generally feels who is married to a young wife; perhaps the deſign he has in view requires that you ſhould live in a ſtate of familiarity with your friend, without alarming either your huſband or yourſelf; perhaps he only means to give you a teſtimony of confidence and eſteem, worthy of that which he entertains for you. You ſhould never oppoſe ſuch ſentiments, as if the weight of them was too much for you to endure; and for my part, I think, that you cannot act more agreeably to the dictates of prudence and modeſty, than

than by relying entirely on his tenderneſs and underſtanding.

Could you, without diſobliging Mr Wolmar, puniſh yourſelf for a vanity you never had, and prevent a danger which no longer exiſts? Remain alone with the philoſopher; uſe all the ſuperfluous precautions againſt him which would formerly have been of ſuch ſervice to you; maintain the ſame reſerve as if you ſtill miſtruſted your own heart and his, as well as your own virtue. Avoid all pathetic converſation, all tender recollection of times paſt; break off or prevent long private interviews; be conſtantly ſurrounded by your children; do not ſtay long with him in a room, in elyſium, or in the grove, notwithſtanding the profanation. Above all things, uſe theſe precautions in ſo natural a manner, that they may ſeem to be the effect of chance, and that he may never once ſuſpect that you are afraid of him. You love to go upon the water; but you deprive yourſelf of the pleaſure, on account of your huſband who is afraid of that element, and of your children whom you do not chuſe to venture there. Take the advantage of this abſence, to entertain yourſelf with this recreation, and leave your children to the care of Fanny. By this means you may ſecurely devote yourſelf to the ſweet familiarity of friendſhip, and quietly enjoy a long *tête-à-tête* under the protection of the watermen, who ſee without underſtanding, and from whom we cannot go far without thinking what we are about.

A thought occurs to me which many people would laugh at, but with which you will be pleaſed I am ſure; that is, to keep an exact

journal in your huſband's abſence, to ſhew him on his return; and to think on this journal, with regard to every circumſtance which is to be ſet down in it. In truth, I do not believe that ſuch an expedient would be of ſervice to many women; but a ſincere mind, incapable of deceit, has many reſources againſt vice, which others want. We ought to deſpiſe nothing which tends to preſerve a purity of manners, and it is by means of trifling precautions that great virtues are ſecured.

Upon the whole, as your huſband is to ſee me in his way, he will tell me, I hope, the true reaſons of his journey; and if I do not find them ſubſtantial, I will diſſuade him from proceeding any farther; or at all events, I will do what he has refuſed to do: upon this you may depend. In the mean time, I think I have ſaid enough to fortify you againſt a trial of eight days. Go, Julia, I know you too well, not to anſwer for you as much, nay more than I could for myſelf. You will always be what you ought to be, and what you deſire to be. If you do but rely on the integrity of your own mind, you will run no riſque whatever; for I have no faith in theſe unforeſeen defects; it is in vain to diſguiſe voluntary failings by the idle appellation of weakneſſes; no woman was ever yet overcome who had not an inclination to ſurrender; and if I thought that ſuch a fate could attend you, believe me, truſt to the tenderneſs of my friendſhip, rely on all the ſentiments which would ariſe in the heart of your poor Clara, I ſhould be too ſenſibly intereſted in your protection, to abandon you entirely to yourſelf.

As to what Mr Wolmar declared to you concerning the intelligence he received before your marriage, I am not much ſurpriſed at it; you know I always ſuſpected it; and I will tell you, moreover, that my ſuſpicions are not confined to the indiſcretions of B———. I could never ſuppoſe that a man of truth and integrity like your father, and who had ſome ſuſpicions at leaſt himſelf, would reſolve to impoſe upon his ſon-in-law and his friend. If he engaged you ſo ſtrictly to ſecrecy, it was becauſe the mode of diſcovery would come from him in a very different manner to what it would have proceeded from you; and becauſe he was willing, no doubt, to give it a turn leſs likely to diſguſt Mr Wolmar, than that which he very well knew you would not fail to give it yourſelf. But I muſt diſmiſs your meſſenger; in a month hence, we will chat about theſe matters more at our leiſure.

Adieu, my deareſt couſin, I have preached long enough to the preacher; reſume your old occupation.———I find myſelf quite uneaſy that I cannot be with you yet. I diſorder all my affairs, by hurrying to diſpatch them, and I ſcarce know what to do. Ah Chaillot, Chaillot . . . if I was leſs giddy . . . but I always hope that I ſhall——

P. S. A propos; I forgot to make my compliments to your highneſs. Tell me, I beſeech you, is the gentleman your huſband Atteman, Knes, or Boyard *? O poor child! You, who

* She did not know that the firſt two names are titles of diſtinction in Ruſſia, but Boyard is only that of a private gentleman.

have ſo often lamented being born a gentlewoman, are very fortunate to become the wife of a prince! Between ourſelves, nevertheleſs, you diſcover apprehenſions which are ſomewhat vulgar for a woman of ſuch high quality. Do not you know, that little ſcruples belong to mean people, and that one would laugh at a child of a good family, who ſhould pretend to be his father's ſon?

LETTER CXXXIII.

Mr WOLMAR *to Mrs* ORBE.

I AM going to Etange, my ſweet couſin, and I propoſed to call upon you in my way: but a delay, of which you are the cauſe, obliges me to make more haſte; and I had rather lie at Lauſanne as I come back, that I may paſs a few hours the more with you. Beſides, I want to conſult you with regard to many particulars, which it is proper to communicate beforehand, that you may have time to conſider them before you give me your opinion.

I would not explain my ſcheme to you in relation to the young man, till his preſence had confirmed the good opinion I had conceived of him. I think I may now depend upon him ſufficiently to acquaint you, between ourſelves, that my deſign is to intruſt him with the education of my children. I am not ignorant that thoſe important concerns are the principal duty of a parent; but when it will be time to exert them, I ſhall be too old to diſcharge them; and being

being calm and ſpeculative by conſtitution, I ſhould never have been ſufficiently active to govern the ſpirit of youth. Beſides, for a reaſon you know *, Julia would be concerned to ſee me aſſume an office, in which I ſhould never acquit myſelf to her liking. I have a thouſand reaſons beſides; your ſex is not equal to theſe duties; their mother ſhall confine herſelf to the education of her Harriot; to your ſhare I allot the management of the houſehold upon the plan already eſtabliſhed, and of which you approve; and it ſhall be my buſineſs to behold three worthy people concurring to promote the happineſs of the family, and to enjoy that repoſe in my old age, for which I ſhall be indebted to their labours.

I have always found, that my wife was extremely averſe from truſting her children to the care of mercenaries, and I could not diſapprove of her ſcruples. The reſpectable capacity of a preceptor requires ſo many talents which are not to be paid for, ſo many virtues which have no price ſet upon them, that it is in vain to think of procuring one by means of money. It is from a man of genius only that we can expect the talents of a preceptor; it is from the heart of an affectionate friend alone that we can hope to meet with the zeal of a parent; and genius is not to be ſold any more than attachment.

In your friend all the requiſite qualities ſeem to be united; and if I am well acquainted with

* The reader is not yet acquainted with this reaſon; but he is deſired not to be impatient.

his diſpoſition, I do not think he would deſire greater happineſs, than to make thoſe beloved children contribute to their mother's felicity. The only obſtacle I can foreſee is his affection to Lord B——, which will not allow him to diſengage himſelf from ſo dear a friend, to whom he has ſuch great obligations, at leaſt if his Lordſhip does not require it himſelf. We expect to ſee this extraordinary man very ſoon; and as you have a great aſcendancy over him, if he anſwers the idea you have given me of him, I may commit the buſineſs to your management, ſo far as relates to him.

You have now, my dear couſin, the clue of my whole conduct, which, without this explanation, muſt have appeared very extraordinary, and which, I hope, will hereafter meet with Julia's approbation and yours. The advantage of having ſuch a wife as I have, made me try many expedients which would have been impracticable with another. Though I leave her, in full confidence, with her old lover, under no other guard than her own virtue, it would be madneſs to eſtabliſh that lover in my family, before I was certain that he ceaſed to be ſuch; and how could I be aſſured of it, if I had a wife on whom I had leſs dependence?

I have often obſerved you ſmile at my remarks on love; but now I think I can mortify you. I have made a diſcovery which neither you nor any other women, with all the ſubtlety they attribute to your ſex, would ever have made; the proof of which you will nevertheleſs perceive at firſt ſight, and you will allow it to be equal to demonſtration, when I explain to

you

you the principles on which I ground it. Was I to tell you that my young couple are more fond than ever, this undoubtedly would not appear wonderful to you. Was I to aſſure you, on the contrary, that they are perfectly cured; you know the power of reaſon and virtue, and therefore you would not look upon that neither as a great miracle: but if I tell you, that both theſe oppoſites are true at the ſame time; that they love each other with more ardour than ever, and that nothing ſubſiſts between them but a virtuous attachment; that they are always lovers, and yet never more than friends; this, I imagine, is what you would leaſt expect, what you will have more difficulty to conceive, and what nevertheleſs preciſely correſponds with truth.

This is the riddle, which makes thoſe frequent contradictions, which you muſt have obſerved in them, both in their converſation and in their letters. What you wrote to Julia concerning the picture, has ſerved more than any thing to explain the myſtery; and I find that they are always ſincere, even in contradicting themſelves continually. When I ſay they, I ſpeak particularly of the young man; for as to your friend, one can only ſpeak of her by conjecture. A vail of wiſdom and honour makes ſo many folds about her heart, that it is impenetrable to human eyes, even to her own. The only circumſtance which leads me to imagine that ſhe has ſtill ſome diſtruſt to overcome, is, that ſhe is continually conſidering with herſelf what ſhe ſhould do if ſhe was perfectly cured; and ſhe examines herſelf with ſo much accuracy,

cy, that if ſhe was really cured, ſhe would not do it ſo well.

As to your friend, who, though virtuouſly inclined, is leſs apprehenſive of his preſent feelings, I find that he ſtill retains all the affections of his youth; but I perceive them without having any reaſon to be offended at them. It is not Julia Wolmar he is fond of, but Julia Etange; he does not hate me as the poſſeſſor of the object I love, but as the raviſher of her whom he doated on. His friend's wife is not his miſtreſs, the mother of two children is not her who was formerly his ſcholar. It is true ſhe is very like that perſon, and often puts him in mind of her. He loves her in the time paſt. This is the true explanation of the riddle. Deprive him of his memory, and you deſtroy his love.

This is not an idle ſubtlety, my pretty couſin, but a ſolid obſervation, which, if extended to other affections, may admit of a more general application than one would imagine. I even think that it would not be difficult to explain it by your own ideas. At the time you parted the two lovers, their paſſion was at the higheſt degree of impetuoſity. Perhaps, if they had continued much longer together, they would gradually have grown cool; but their imagination, being ſtrongly affected, conſtantly preſented each to the other in the light in which they appeared at the time of their ſeparation. The young man, not perceiving thoſe alterations which the progreſs of time made in his miſtreſs, loved her ſuch as he had ſeen her formerly, not

ſuch as ſhe was then *. To complete his happineſs, it would not have been enough to have given him poſſeſſion of her, unleſs ſhe could have been given to him at the ſame age, and under the ſame circumſtances ſhe was in, when their loves commenced. The leaſt alteration in theſe particulars would have leſſened ſo much of the felicity he propoſed to himſelf; ſhe is grown handſomer, but ſhe is altered; her improvement, in that ſenſe, turns her prejudice; for it is of his former miſtreſs, not of any other, that he is enamoured.

The error which deceives him, is, that he confounds the times, and often reproaches himſelf on account of a paſſion which he thinks preſent, but which is nothing more than the effect of too tender a recollection. I do not know, however, whether it will not be better to accompliſh his cure, than to undeceive him. More advantage perhaps may be drawn from his miſtake, than from his better judgment. To diſcover to him the true ſtate of his affections, would be to apprize him of the death of the object he loved; this might be an affliction dangerous

* You women are very ridiculous to think of rendering ſuch a frivolous and fluctuating paſſion as that of love conſiſtent. Every thing in nature is changeable, every thing is in continual fluctuation; and yet you would inſpire a conſtant paſſion; And what right have you to pretend that we muſt love you for ever, becauſe we loved you yeſterday? Then preſerve the ſame face, the ſame age, the ſame humour; be always the ſame, and we will always love you, if we can. But when your alter continually, and require us always to love you, it is in fact deſiring us every minute not to love you; it is not ſeeking for conſtant minds, but looking out for ſuch as are fickle as your own.

gerous to him, inaſmuch as a ſtate of melancholy is always favourable to love.

Delivered from the ſcruples which reſtrain him, he would perhaps be more apt to indulge recollections which he ought to ſtifle; he would converſe with leſs reſerve, and the traces of Julia are not ſo effaced in Mrs Wolmar, but upon examination he might find them again. I have thought, that inſtead of undeceiving him with reſpect to his opinion of the progreſs he has made, and which encourages him to purſue it to the end, we ſhould rather endeavour to baniſh the remembrance of thoſe times which he ought to forget, by ſkilfully ſubſtituting other ideas in the room of thoſe he is ſo fond of. You, who contributed to give them birth, may contribute more than any one to efface them: but I ſhall wait till we are all together, that I may tell you in your ear what you ſhall do for this purpoſe; a charge which, if I am not miſtaken, will not be very burdenſome to me. In the mean time, I endeavour to make the objects of his dread familiar to him, by preſenting them to him in ſuch a manner, that he may no longer think them dangerous. He is impetuous, but tractable and eaſily managed. I avail myſelf of this advantage to give a turn to his imagination. In the room of his miſtreſs, I compel him always to look at the wife of his friend, and the mother of my children; I efface one picture by another, and hide the paſt with the preſent. We always ride a ſtartliſh horſe up to the object which frights him, that he may not be frightened at it again. We ſhould act in the ſame manner with thoſe young people, whoſe

whoſe imaginations are on fire even after their affections are grown cold, and whoſe fancy preſents monſters at a diſtance, which diſappear as they approach.

I flatter myſelf that I am well acquainted with the ſtrength of both, and that I do not expoſe them to a trial which they cannot ſupport: for wiſdom does not conſiſt in uſing all kinds of precautions indiſcriminately; but in chuſing thoſe which are really uſeful, and in neglecting ſuch as are ſuperfluous. The eight days, during which I leave them together, will perhaps be ſufficient for them to diſcover the true ſtate of their minds, and to know in what relation they really ſtand to each other. The oftner they perceive themſelves in private with each other, the ſooner they will find out their miſtake, by comparing their preſent ſenſations with thoſe they felt formerly when they were in the ſame ſituation. Beſides, it is of importance that they ſhould accuſtom themſelves to endure, without danger, that ſtate of familiarity in which they muſt neceſſarily live together if my ſcheme takes place. I find by Julia's conduct, that you have given her advice, which ſhe could not refuſe taking without wronging herſelf. What pleaſure I ſhould take in giving her this proof that I am ſenſible of her real worth, if ſhe was a woman with whom a huſband might make a merit of ſuch confidence! But if ſhe gains nothing over her affections, her virtue will ſtill remain the ſame; it will coſt her dearer, and ſhe will not triumph the leſs. Whereas, if ſhe is ſtill in danger of feeling any inward uneaſineſs, it can ariſe only from ſome moving converſation,

which

which ſhe muſt be too ſenſible beforehand will awaken recollection, and which ſhe will therefore always avoid. Thus you ſee, my conduct in this inſtance muſt not be judged of by common maxims, but from the motives which actuate me, and from the ſingular diſpoſition of her who is the object of my concern.

Farewell, my dear couſin, till my return. Though I have not entered into theſe explanations with Julia, I do not deſire you to keep them ſecret from her. It is a maxim with me, never to make ſecrets among my friends; therefore I commit theſe to your diſcretion; make ſuch uſe of them as your prudence and friendſhip will direct. I know you will do nothing, but what is beſt and moſt proper.

LETTER CXXXIV.

To Lord B——.

MR Wolmar ſet out yeſterday for Etange, and you can ſcarce conceive in what a melancholy ſtate his departure has left me. I think the abſence of his wife would not have affected me ſo much as his. I find myſelf under greater reſtraint, than even when he is preſent; a mournful ſilence takes poſſeſſion of my heart; its murmurs are ſtifled by a ſecret dread; and, being leſs tormented with deſires than apprehenſions, I experience all the horrors of guilt, without being expoſed to the temptations of it.

Can you imagine, my Lord, where my mind gains confidence, and loſes theſe unworthy fears? In

In the preſence of Mrs Wolmar. As ſoon as I approach her, the ſight of her pacifies my inquietude; her looks purify my heart. Such is the aſcendency of her's, that it always ſeems to inſpire others with a ſenſe of her innocence, and to confer that compoſure which is the effect of it. Unluckily for me, her ſyſtem of life does not allow her to devote the whole day to the ſociety of her friends; and in thoſe moments which I am obliged to paſs out of her company, I ſhould ſuffer leſs if I was farther diſtant from her.

What contributes to feed the melancholy with which I am oppreſſed, is a reflection which ſhe made yeſterday after her huſband's departure. Though till that moment ſhe kept up her ſpirits tolerably, yet for a long time her eyes followed him with an air of tenderneſs, which I then imagined was only occaſioned by the departure of that happy huſband; but I found by her converſation, that the emotion was to be imputed to another cauſe, which was a ſecret to me. You ſee, ſaid ſhe, in what manner we live together, and you may judge whether he is dear to me. Do not imagine, however, that the ſentiment which attaches me to him, though as tender and as powerful as that of love, is likewiſe ſuſceptible of its weakneſs. If an interruption of the agreeable habit of living together is painful to us, we are conſoled by the firm hope of reſuming the ſame habit again. A ſtate of ſuch permanence admits few viciſſitudes which we have reaſon to dread; and in an abſence of a few days, the pain of ſo ſhort an interval does not affect me ſo ſtrongly, as the

pleaſure of ſeeing an end to it. The affliction, which you read in my eyes, proceeds from a more weighty cauſe; and though it is relative to Mr Wolmar, it is not his departure which occaſions it.

My dear friend, continued ſhe, with an affecting tone, there is no true happineſs on earth. My huſband is one of the moſt worthy and affectionate of men; the duty which incites us is cemented by mutual inclination; he has no deſires but mine; I have children which give, and promiſe pleaſure hereafter to their mother; there cannot be a more affectionate, virtuous, and amiable friend, than her whom my heart doats on, and with whom I ſhall paſs my days; you yourſelf contribute to my felicity, by having ſo well juſtified my eſteem and affection for you; a long and expenſive law-ſuit, which is nearly finiſhed, will ſoon bring the beſt of fathers to my arms; every thing proſpers with us; peace and order reign throughout the family; our ſervants are zealous and faithful, our neighbours expreſs every kind of attachment to us, we enjoy the good-will of the public. Bleſt with every thing which heaven, fortune, and men can beſtow, all things conſpire to my happineſs. A ſecret uneaſineſs, one trouble only, poiſons all, and I am not happy. She uttered theſe laſt words with a ſigh, which pierced my ſoul, and which I had no ſhare in raiſing. She is not happy, ſaid I, ſighing in my turn, and I am no longer an obſtacle to her felicity!

That melancholy thought diſordered my ideas in a moment, and diſturbed the repoſe which I began to taſte. Unable to endure the intoler-

able

able ſtate of doubt into which her converſation had thrown me, I importuned her ſo eagerly to diſcloſe her whole mind to me, that at length ſhe depoſited the fatal ſecret with me, and allows me to communicate it to you. But this is the hour of recreation, Mrs Wolmar is come out of the nurſery to walk with her children, ſhe has juſt told me as much. I attend her, my Lord; I leave you for the preſent; and ſhall reſume, in my next, the ſubject I am now obliged to quit.

LETTER CXXXV.

Mrs WOLMAR *to her Huſband.*

I EXPECT you next Tueſday according to your appointment, and you will find every thing diſpoſed agreeable to your deſire. Call on Mrs Orbe in your way back; ſhe will tell you what has paſſed during your abſence; I had rather you ſhould learn it from her than from me.

I flattered myſelf, Mr Wolmar, that I had deſerved your eſteem; but your conduct is not the moſt prudent, and you ſport moſt cruelly with your wife's virtue.

LETTER CXXXVI.

To Lord B——.

I MUST give you an account, my Lord, of a danger we have incurred within theſe few

days, and from whence we are happily delivered at the expence of a little terror and fatigue. This relation very well deſerves a letter by itſelf; when you read it, you will perceive the motives which engage me to write.

You know that Mrs Wolmar's houſe is not far from the lake, and that ſhe is fond of the water. It is three days ſince her huſband's abſence has left us without employment; and the pleaſantneſs of the evening made us form a ſcheme for one of theſe parties the next day. Soon as the ſun was up we went to the river's ſide; we took a boat with nets for fiſhing, three rowers, and a ſervant, and we embarked with ſome proviſions for dinner. I took a fowling-piece to knock down ſome peſolets *; but was aſhamed to kill birds out of wantonneſs, and only for the pleaſure of doing miſchief. I amuſed myſelf therefore in obſerving the ſiflets, the crenets §, and I fired but once at a grebe, at a great diſtance, which I miſſed.

We paſſed an hour or two in fiſhing within 500 paces of the ſhore. We had good ſucceſs, but Julia had them all thrown into the water again, except a trout which had received a blow from the oar. The animals, ſaid ſhe, are in pain; let us deliver them; let us enjoy the pleaſure they will feel on eſcaping from danger. This operation, however, was performed ſlowly, and againſt the grain, not without ſome repreſenta-

* A bird of paſſage on the lake of Geneva, which is not good to eat.

§ Different ſorts of birds on the lake of Geneva, and very good to eat.

ſentations againſt it; and I found that our gentry would have had a much better reliſh for the fiſh they had catched, than for the moral which ſaved their lives.

We then launched farther into the lake; ſoon after, with all the vivacity of a young man, which it is time for me to check, undertaking to manage the maſter-oar, I rowed the boat into the middle of the lake, ſo that we were ſoon above a league from ſhore. Then I explained to Julia, every part of that ſuperb horizon which environed us. I ſhewed her at a diſtance the mouth of the Rhone; whoſe impetuous current ſtops on a ſudden within a quarter of a league, as if it was afraid to ſully the chryſtal azure of the lake with its muddy waters. I made her obſerve the redans of the mountains, whoſe correſpondent angles running parallel, formed a bed in the ſpace between fit to receive the river which occupied it. As we got farther from ſhore, I had great pleaſure in making her take notice of the rich and delightful banks of the *Pays de Vaud*, where the vaſt number of towns, the prodigious throng of people, with the beautiful and verdant hills all around, formed a moſt raviſhing landſcape; where every ſpot of ground, being cultivated and equally fertile, ſupplies the huſbandman, the ſhepherd, and the vine-dreſſer, with the certain fruits of their labours, which are not devoured by the greedy publican. Afterwards I pointed out *Chablais*, a country not leſs favoured by nature, and which nevertheleſs affords nothing but a ſpectacle of wretchedneſs; I made her perceive the manifeſt diſtinction between the different effects of the two governments,

ments, with reſpect to the riches, number, and happineſs, of the inhabitants. It is thus, ſaid I, that the earth expands her fruitful boſom, and laviſhes treaſures among thoſe happy people who cultivate it for themſelves. She ſeems to ſmile and be enlivened at the ſweet aſpect of liberty; ſhe loves to nouriſh mankind. On the contrary, the mournful ruins, the heath and brambles which cover a half defart country, proclaim from afar that it is under the dominion of an abſent proprietor, and that it yields with reluctance a ſcanty produce to ſlaves who reap no advantage from it.

While we were agreeably amuſing ourſelves with viewing the neighbouring coaſts, a gale ariſing, which drove us aſlant towards the oppoſite ſhore, began to blow very high, and when we thought to tack about, the reſiſtance was ſo ſtrong that it was impoſſible for our ſlight boat to overcome it. The waves ſoon began to grow dreadful; we endeavoured to make for the coaſt of Savoy, and tried to land at the village of Meillerie, which was over-againſt us, and the only place almoſt where the ſhore affords a convenient landing. But the wind changing, and blowing ſtronger, rendered all the endeavours of the watermen ineffectual, and diſcovered to us a range of ſteep rocks ſomewhat lower, where there was no ſhelter.

We all tugged at our oars; and at that inſtant I had the mortification to perceive Julia grow ſick, and ſee her weak and fainting at the bottom of the boat. Happily ſhe had been uſed to the water, and her ſickneſs was not of long duration. In the mean time, our efforts increaſed

ſed with our danger; the heat of the ſun, the fatigue, and profuſe ſweating, took away our breaths, and made us exceſſively faint. Then ſummoning all her courage, Julia revived our ſpirits by her compaſſionate kindneſs; ſhe wiped the ſweat from off our faces; and mixing ſome wine and water, for fear of intoxication, ſhe preſented it alternately to thoſe who were moſt exhauſted. No, your lovely friend never appeared with ſuch luſtre as at that moment, when the heat and the agitation of her ſpirits gave an additional glow to her complexion; and what greatly improved her charms, was, that you might plainly perceive, by the tenderneſs of her behaviour, that her ſolicitude proceeded leſs from apprehenſions for herſelf than compaſſion for us. At one time two planks having ſtarted by a ſhock which dipt us all, ſhe concluded that the boat was ſplit, and in the exclamation of that affectionate mother, I heard theſe words diſtinctly: O my children, muſt I never ſee you more! As for myſelf, whoſe imagination always exceeds the danger, though I knew the utmoſt of our perilous condition, yet I expected every minute to ſee the boat ſwallowed up, that delicate beauty ſtruggling in the midſt of the waves, and the roſes upon her cheeks chilled by the cold hand of death.

At length, by dint of labour we reached Meillerie; and after having ſtruggled above an hour within ten paces of the ſhore, we at laſt effected a landing. Which done, all our fatigues were forgotten. Julia took upon herſelf to recompenſe the trouble which every one had taken; and as in the height of danger her concern

cern was for us, ſhe ſeemed now on ſhore to imagine that we had ſaved nobody but her.

We dined with that appetite which is the gift of hard labour. The trout was ſerved up: Julia, who was extremely fond of it, eat but little; and I perceived, that to make the watermen amends for the regret which the late ſacrifice coſt them, ſhe did not chuſe that I ſhould eat much myſelf. My Lord, you have obſerved a thouſand times that her amiable diſpoſition is to be ſeen in trifles as well as in matters of conſequence.

After dinner, the water being ſtill rough, and the boat wanting to be refitted, I propoſed taking a walk. Julia objected to the wind and ſun, and took notice of my being fatigued. I had my views, and obviated all her objections. I have been accuſtomed, ſaid I, to violent exerciſe from my infancy; far from hurting my health, they ſtrengthen my conſtitution; and my late voyage has made me ſtill more robuſt. As to the ſun and wind, you have your ſtraw hat, and we will get under the wind and in the woods; we need only climb among the rocks, and you who are not fond of a flat, will willingly bear the fatigue. She conſented, and we ſet out while our people were at dinner.

You know, that when I was baniſhed from Valais, I came, about ten years ago, to Meillerie, to wait for leave to return. It was there I paſſed thoſe melancholy but pleaſing days, ſolely intent upon her; and it was from thence I wrote her that letter, with which ſhe was ſo greatly affected. I always wiſhed to re-viſit that lovely retreat, which ſerved me as an aſylum in the midſt

midſt of ice, and where my heart loved to converſe, in idea, with the deareſt object. An opportunity of viſiting this beloved ſpot in a more agreeable ſeaſon, and in company with her whoſe image formerly dwelt there with me, was the ſecret motive of my walk. I took a pleaſure in pointing out to her thoſe old memorials of a paſſion ſo conſtant and ſo unfortunate.

We got thither after an hour's walk through cool and winding paths, which aſcending inſenſibly between the trees and the rocks, were no otherwiſe inconvenient than by being tedious. As we drew near, and I recollected former tokens, I found myſelf a little diſordered; but I overcame it, I concealed my uneaſineſs, and we reached the place. This ſolitary ſpot formed a wild and deſert nook, but full of thoſe ſorts of beauties which are only agreeable to ſuſceptible minds, and appear horrible to others. A torrent, occaſioned by the melting of the ſnow, rolled in a muddy ſtream within twenty paces of us, and carried dirt, ſand, and ſtones along with it, not without conſiderable noiſe. Behind us, a chain of inacceſſible rocks divided the place where we ſtood from that part of the Alps which they call the Ice-houſes, becauſe from the beginning of the world they have been covered with vaſt mountains of ice, which are continually increaſing *. Foreſts of gloomy fir-trees afforded us a melancholy ſhade on the right. On the

* Theſe mountains are ſo high, that half an hour after ſunſet, its rays ſtill gild the tops of them, and the reflection of red on thoſe white ſummits, forms a beautiful roſeate colour, which may be perceived at a great diſtance.

the left was a large wood of oak, beyond which the torrent iſſued, and beneath, that vaſt body of water, which the lake forms in the bay of the Alps, parted us from the rich coſt of the *Pays de Vaud*, crowning the whole landſcape with the top of the majeſtic Jura.

In the midſt of theſe noble and ſuperb objects, the little ſpot where we were diſplayed all the charms of an agreeable and rural retreat; ſmall floods of water filtered through the rocks, and flowed along the verdure in chryſtal ſtreams. Some wild fruit-trees leaned their heads over ours; the cool and moiſt earth was covered with graſs and flowers. Comparing this agreeable retreat with the objects which ſurrounded us, one would have thought that this deſart ſpot was deſigned as an aſylum for two lovers, who alone had eſcaped the general wreck of nature.

When we had reached this corner, and I had attentively examined it for ſome time, Now, ſaid I to Julia, looking at her with eyes ſwimming in tears, is your heart perfectly ſtill in this place, and do you feel no ſecret emotion at the ſight of a ſpot which is full of you? Immediately, without waiting for her anſwer, I led her towards the rock, and ſhewed her where her cypher was engraved in a thouſand places, with ſeveral verſes in Petrarch and Taſſo relative to the ſtate I was in when I engraved them. On ſeeing them again at ſuch a diſtance of time, I found how powerfully the review of theſe objects renewed my former violent ſenſations. I addreſſed her with ſome degree of impetuoſity: O Julia, the everlaſting delight of my ſoul! this is the ſpot, where the moſt conſtant lover in the world formerly

merly ſighed for thee. This is the retreat, where thy beloved image made all the ſcene of his felicity, and prepared him for that happineſs which you yourſelf afterwards diſpenſed. No fruit or ſhade were then to be found here: theſe compartments were not then furniſhed with verdure or flowers; the courſe of theſe ſtreams did not then make theſe ſeparations, theſe birds did not chirp then, the voracious ſpar-hawk, the diſmal crow, and the dreadful eagle alone made theſe caverns echo with their cries; huge lumps of ice hung from theſe rocks; feſtoons of ſnow were all the ornaments which bedecked theſe trees; every thing here bore marks of the rigour of winter and hoary froſt; the ardour of my affection alone made this place ſupportable, and I ſpent whole days here wrapt in thought of thee. Here is the ſtone where I uſed to ſit, to reflect on your happy abode at a diſtance; on this I penned that letter which moved your heart; theſe ſharp flints ſerved me as graving tools to cut out your name; here I croſſed that frozen torrent to regain one of your letters which the wind carried off; there I came to review, and give a thouſand kiſſes to the laſt you ever wrote to me; here is the brink where, with a gloomy and greedy eye, I meaſured the depth of this abyſs: in ſhort, it was here that, before my ſad departure, I came to bewail you as dead, and ſwore never to ſurvive you. O thou lovely fair one, too conſtantly adored, thou for whom alone I was born! muſt I reviſit this ſpot with you by my ſide, and muſt I regret the time I ſpent here in bewailing your abſence? . . . . I was proceeding further; but Julia perceiving me draw near

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the brink, was affrighted, and ſeizing my hand, preſſed it, without ſpeaking a word, looked tenderly upon me, and could ſcarce ſuppreſs a riſing ſigh; ſoon after turning from me and taking me by the arm, Let us be gone, my friend, ſaid ſhe, with a tone of emotion, the air of this place is not good for me. I went with her ſighing, but without making her any anſwer; and I quitted that melancholy ſpot for ever, with as much regret as I would have taken leave of Julia herſelf.

We came back gently to the harbour after ſome little wandering, and parted. She choſe to be alone, and I continued walking without knowing whither I went. At my return, the boat not being yet ready, nor the water ſmooth, we made a melancholy ſupper, with downcaſt eyes, and penſive looks, eating little, and talking ſtill leſs. After ſupper, we ſat on the ſtrand, waiting an opportunity to go off. The moon ſhone on a ſudden, the water became ſmoother, and Julia propoſed our departure. I handed her into the boat, and when I ſat down by her, I never thought of quitting her hand. We kept a profound ſilence. The equal and meaſured ſound of the oars threw me into a reverie. The lively chirping of the ſnipes, recalling to my mind the pleaſures of a paſt period, made me dull. By degrees I found the melancholy which oppreſſed me increaſe. A ſerene ſky, the mild reflection of the moon, the ſilver froth of the water which ſparkled around us, the concurrence of agreeable ſenſations, even the preſence of the beloved object herſelf, could not baniſh bitter reflections from my mind.

I be-

I began with recollecting a walk of the ſame kind which we took together, during the rapture of our early loves. All the pleaſing ſenſations which then affected me, were preſent to my mind to torment me the more; all the adventures of our youth, our ſtudies, our entertainments, our letters, our aſſignations, our pleaſures,

E tanta fede, e ſi dolci memorie,
E ſi lungo coſtume!

Our conſtant vows, memorials ſweet!
Which love ſo often prompted to repeat.

A crowd of objects, which recalled the image of my paſt happineſs, all preſſed upon me and ruſhed into my memory, to increaſe my preſent wretchedneſs. It is paſt, ſaid I to myſelf, thoſe times, thoſe happy times will be no more; they are gone for ever! Alas! they will never return; and yet we live, and we are together, and our hearts are ſtill united! I ſeemed as if I could have endured her death or her abſence with more patience; and thought that I had ſuffered leſs all the time I was parted from her. When I bewailed her at a diſtance, the hope of ſeeing her again was comfort to my ſoul; I flattered myſelf that the ſight of her would baniſh all my ſorrows in an inſtant, at leaſt I could conceive it poſſible to be in a more cruel ſituation than my own. But to be by her ſide; to ſee her, to touch her, to talk to her, to love her, to adore her, and, whilſt I almoſt enjoyed her again, to find her loſt to me for ever; this was what threw me into ſuch fits of fury and rage, as by degrees agitated me even to deſpair. My mind

ſoon began to conceive deadly projects, and in a tranſport, which I yet tremble to think of, I was violently tempted to throw her with myſelf into the waves, and there to end in her arms my days and tedious torments. This horrid temptation grew ſo ſtrong at laſt, that I was obliged ſuddenly to quit her hand and walk to the other end of the boat.

There my lively emotions began to take another turn; a more gentle ſenſation by degrees ſtole upon my mind, and tenderneſs overcame deſpair: I began to ſhed floods of tears; and that condition, compared to the ſtate I had juſt been in, was not unattended with pleaſure. I wept heartily for a long time, and found myſelf eaſier. When I was tolerably compoſed, I returned to Julia, and took her by the hand again. She held her handkerchief in her hand, which I found wet. Ah! ſaid I to her ſoftly, I find that our hearts have not ceaſed to ſympathiſe! True, ſaid ſhe, in a broken accent, but may it be the laſt time they ever correſpond in this manner! We then began to talk about indifferent matters; and after an hour's rowing, we arrived without any other accident. When we came in, I perceived that her eyes were red and much ſwelled; and ſhe muſt have diſcovered that mine were not in a better condition. After the fatigue of this day, ſhe ſtood in great need of reſt: ſhe withdrew, and I went to bed.

Such, my friend, is the journal of the day, in which, without exception, I experienced the moſt lively emotions I ever felt. I hope they will prove a criſis, which will entirely reſtore me to myſelf. Moreover, I muſt tell you that this

this adventure has convinced me, more than all the power of argument, of the free-will of man, and the merit of virtue. How many people yield to weak temptations? As for Julia, my eyes beheld, and my heart felt her emotions: ſhe underwent the moſt violent ſtruggle that day that ever human nature ſuſtained; nevertheleſs, ſhe conquered. O, my Lord, when, ſeduced by your miſtreſs, you had power at once to triumph over her deſires and your own, was you not more than man? But for your example, I had perhaps been loſt. A hundred times in that perilous day, did the recollection of your virtue renew and ſtrengthen mine.

LETTER CXXXV.*

From Lord B——.

ROUSE yourſelf, my friend, and emerge from childhood. Let not your reaſon ſlumber to the end of your life. The hours glide imperceptibly away, and it is now high time for you to grow wiſe. At thirty years of age ſurely a man ſhould begin to reflect. Reflect, therefore, and be a man for once before your death.

My dear friend, your heart has long impoſed on your underſtanding. You ſtrove to philoſophiſe before you were capable of it: you miſtook your feelings for reaſon; and by eſtimating

* This letter appears to have been written before the receipt of the preceding.

things from the impreſſions they made on you, you have always continued ignorant of their real value. A good heart, I will own, is indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the knowledge of truth: he who feels nothing can learn nothing; he may float from error to error in a ſea of ſcepticiſm, but his diſcoveries will be vain, and his information fruitleſs, being ignorant of the relation of things to man, on which all true ſcience depends. It were to ſtop half-way, however, in our purſuits after knowledge, not to inquire alſo into the relation of things to each other, in order to be better able to judge of their connection with ourſelves. It is of little importance to know the nature and operation of our paſſions, if we know not at the ſame time how to judge of and eſtimate their objects; and this latter knowledge is to be attained only in the calm retreats of meditation.

The youth of the philoſopher is the time for experiment, his paſſions being the inſtrument of his inquiries; but after having applied himſelf long enough to the perception of external objects, he retires within himſelf to conſider, to compare, to know them. To this taſk you ought to apply yourſelf ſooner than any other perſon in the world. All the pleaſures and pains, of which a ſuſceptible mind is capable, you have felt; all that a man can ſee, you have ſeen. In the ſpace of twelve years you have exhauſted all thoſe ſenſations which might have ſerved you during a long life, and have acquired even in youth the extenſive experience of age. The firſt obſervations you were led to make, were on ſimple unpoliſhed villagers, on perſons almoſt ſuch

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as they came out of the hand of nature; juſt as if they had been preſented to you for the groundwork of your piece, or as proper objects by which to compare every other. Baniſhed next to the metropolis of one of the moſt celebrated people in the univerſe, you leaped, as one may ſay, from one extremity to the other, your genius ſupplying all the intermediate degrees. Then viſiting the only nation of *men*, which remains among the various herds that are ſcattered over the face of the earth, you had an opportunity of ſeeing a well-governed ſociety, or at leaſt a ſociety under a good government; you had there an opportunity of obſerving how far the public voice is the foundation of liberty. You have travelled through all climates, and have viſited all countries beneath the ſun. Add to this a ſight ſtill more worthy admiration, that which you enjoy in the preſence of a ſublime and refined ſoul, triumphant over its paſſions, and ruling over itſelf. The firſt object of your affections is that which is now daily before you; your admiration of which is but the better founded for your having ſeen and contemplated ſo many others. There is now nothing more worth your attention or concern. The only object of your future contemplation, ſhould be yourſelf; that of your future enjoyment, the fruits of your knowledge. You have lived enough for this life; think now of living for that which is to laſt for ever.

Your paſſions, by which you were ſo long enſlaved, did not deprive you of your virtue. This is all your boaſt, and doubtleſs you have reaſon to glory in it; yet be not too proud.

Your very fortitude is the effect of your weakneſs. Do you know how it came that you grew enamoured of virtue? It was becauſe virtue always appeared to your imagination in the amiable form of that lovely woman, by whom ſhe is ſo truly repreſented, and whoſe image you will always adore. But will you never love her for her own ſake? Will you never, like Julia, court virtue of your own accord? Vain and indolent enthuſiaſt! will you content yourſelf with barely admiring her virtues, without attempting to imitate them? You ſpeak, in rapture, of the manner in which ſhe diſcharges the important duties of wife and mother; but when will you diſcharge thoſe of a man and a friend, by her example? Shall a woman be able to triumph over herſelf, and a philoſopher find it ſo difficult to conquer of his paſſions? Will you continue to be always a mere prater, like the reſt of them; and be content to write good books, inſtead of doing good actions *? Take care,

* Not that this philoſophical age has not produced one true philoſopher. I know one, I muſt confeſs, and but one; but the happieſt circumſtance is, that he reſides in my native country. Shall I venture publicly to name him, whoſe honour it is to have remained unknown? Yes, learned and modeſt Abduzit, let your ſublime ſimplicity forgive my zeal, which, to ſay truth, hath not your name for its object. No, it is not you I would make known in an age unworthy to admire you; it is Geneva I would honour, by making it known as the place of your reſidence. It is my fellow-citizens who are honoured by your preſence. Happy the country, where the merit that conceals itſelf, is by ſo much the more eſteemed. Happy the people, among whom preſumptuous and forward youth is aſhamed of its dogmatic inſolence, and bluſhes at its vain knowledge before the learned ignorance of age. Venerable and virtuous old man! you have never been praiſed by bab-

care, my friend; I ſtill perceive an air of ſoftneſs and effeminacy in your writing, which diſpleaſes me, as I think it rather the effect of an unextinguiſhed paſſion than peculiar to your character. I hate imbecility in any one, and cannot bear the thoughts of it in my friend. There is no ſuch thing as virtue without fortitude, and puſillanimity is the certain attendant on vice. How dare you rely on your own ſtrength, who have no courage? Unhappy man! were Julia as weak as you, the very firſt opportunity would debaſe you into a vile adulterer. While you remain alone with her, therefore, learn to know her worth, and bluſh at your own demerit.

I am in hopes of ſeeing you ſoon at Clarens: you know the motives of my deſiring to ſee Italy again. Twelve years of miſtakes and troubles have rendered me ſuſpicious of myſelf: to reſiſt my inclinations, however, my own abilities might ſuffice; but to give the preference of one to the other, to know which I ſhould indulge, requires the aſſiſtance of a friend; nor ſhall I take leſs pleaſure in being obliged to him on this occaſion, than I have done in obliging him on others. Between friends, their obligations, as well as their affections, ſhould be reciprocal. Do not deceive yourſelf, however; before I put any confidence in you, I ſhall inquire whether you are worthy of it, and if you de-

babbling wits; no noiſy academician has written your eulogium. Inſtead of depoſiting all your wiſdom in books, you have diſplayed it in your life, as an example to the country you have deigned to make the object of your eſteem. You have lived like Socrates; but he died by the hands of his fellow-citizens, while you are cheriſhed by yours.

deſerve to return me the ſervices you have formerly received. I know your heart, and am ſatisfied with its integrity: but this is not enough; it is your judgment I ſhall have occaſion for, to direct me in making a choice which ſhould be governed entirely by reaſon, and in which mine may be partial. I am not apprehenſive of thoſe paſſions, which, making open war upon us, give us warning to put ourſelves upon our defence, and, whatever be their effect, leave us ſtill conſcious of our errors. We cannot ſo properly be ſaid to be overcome by theſe, as to give way to them. I am more fearful of deluſion than conſtraint, and of being involuntarily induced to do what my reaſon condemns. We have no need of foreign aſſiſtance to ſuppreſs our inclinations; but the aſſiſtance of a friend may be neceſſary to point out which it is moſt prudent to indulge: in this caſe it is that the friendſhip of a wiſe man may be uſeful, by his viewing, in a different light, thoſe objects with which it is our intereſt to be intimately acquainted. Examine yourſelf, therefore, and tell me whether, vainly repining at your fate, you will continue for ever uſeleſs to yourſelf and others, or if, reſuming the command over yourſelf, you will at laſt become capable of adviſing and aſſiſting your friend.

My affairs will not detain me in London more than a fortnight longer, when I ſhall ſet out for our army in Flanders, where I intend to ſtay about the ſame time; ſo that you muſt not expect to ſee me before the end of next month or the beginning of October. In the mean time, write no more to me at London, but direct your let-

letters to the army, agreeable to the incloſed addreſs. When you write, proceed alſo in your deſcriptions; for notwithſtanding the cenſure I paſs on your letters, they both affect and inſtruct me, giving me, at the ſame time, the moſt flattering ideas of a life of peace and retirement, agreeable to my temper and age. Above all, I charge you to eaſe my mind of the diſquietude you have excited concerning Mrs Wolmar. If ſhe be diſſatisfied, who on earth can hope for happineſs? After the relation you have given me, I cannot conceive what can be wanting to complete her felicity.

LETTER CXXXVI.

To Lord B——.

YES, my Lord, I can with tranſport aſſure you, the affair of Meillerie was the criſis of my folly and misfortunes. My converſation with Mr Wolmar made me perfectly acquainted with the true ſtate of my heart. That heart, too weak I confeſs, is nevertheleſs cured of its paſſion as much as it poſſibly can be; and I prefer my preſent ſtate of ſilent regret to that of being perpetually fearful of falling into guilt. Since the return of this worthy friend, I no longer heſitate to give him that title which you have rendered ſo valuable. It is the leaſt I can beſtow on every one who aſſiſts me in returning to the paths of virtue. My heart is now become as peaceful as the manſion I inhabit. I begin to be at eaſe in my reſidence; to live as if I was at home; and

and, if I do not take upon me altogether the tone and authority of maſter, I feel yet a greater pleaſure in ſuppoſing myſelf a brother of the family. There is ſomething ſo delightful in the ſimplicity and equality which reign in this retirement, that I cannot help being affected with tenderneſs and reſpect. Thus I ſpend my days in tranquillity, amidſt practical philoſophy and ſuſceptible virtue. In company with this happy couple, their ſituation inſenſibly affects me, and raiſes my heart by degrees into uniſon with theirs.

What a delightful retreat! What a charming habitation! A continuance in this place renders it even yet more delightful; and though it appear not very ſtriking at firſt ſight, it is impoſſible not to be pleaſed with it, when it is once known. The pleaſure Mrs Wolmar takes in diſcharging the nobleſt duties, in making all who approach her virtuous and happy, communicates itſelf to all thoſe who are the objects of her care, to her huſband, her children, her gueſts, her domeſtics. No tumultuous ſcenes of noiſy mirth, no loud peals of laughter, are heard in this peaceful manſion; but, in their ſtead, you always meet with contented hearts and chearful countenances. If at any time a tear is ſhed, it is the tear of ſenſibility and joy. Troubles, cares, and ſorrow intrude not here, any more than vice and remorſe, of which they are the fruits.

As to Julia, it is certain that, excepting the ſecret cauſe of uneaſineſs with which I acquainted you in my laſt *, every thing conſpires to make

* The letter here alluded to is not inſerted in this collection: the reaſon of it will be ſeen hereafter.

make her happy. And yet, with ſo many reaſons to be ſo, a thouſand other women would think themſelves miſerable in the ſame ſituation. Her uniform and retired manner of living would be to them inſupportable; they would think the noiſe of children intolerable; they would be fatigued to death with the care of their family; they would not be able to bear the country; the eſteem and prudence of a huſband not over-tender, would hardly recompenſe them for his indifference and age; his preſence, and even his regard for them, would be burdenſome. They would either find means to ſend him abroad, that they might live more at their liberty; or would leave him to himſelf; deſpiſing the peaceful pleaſures of their ſituation, and ſeeking more dangerous ones elſewhere, they would never be at eaſe in their own houſe, unleſs when they came as viſitors. It requires a ſound mind to be able to enjoy the pleaſures of retirement; the virtuous only being capable of amuſing themſelves with their family-concerns, and of voluntarily ſecluding themſelves from the world: if there be on earth any ſuch thing as happineſs, they undoubtedly enjoy it in ſuch a ſtate. But the means of happineſs are nothing to thoſe who know not how to make uſe of them; and we never know in what true happineſs conſiſts, till we have acquired a taſte for its enjoyment.

If I were deſired to ſpeak with preciſion, as to the reaſon why the inhabitants of this place are happy, I ſhould think I could not anſwer with greater propriety than to ſay, it is becauſe *they here know how to live*; not in the ſenſe in which theſe words would be taken in France, where it would

would be underſtood that they had adopted certain cuſtoms and manners in vogue: No; but they have adopted ſuch manners as are moſt agreeable to human life, and the purpoſes for which man came into the world; to that life you mention, of which you have ſet me an example, which extends beyond itſelf, and is not given up for loſt even in the hour of death.

Julia has a father who is anxious for the honour and intereſts of his family: ſhe has children for whoſe ſubſiſtence it is neceſſary to provide. This ought to be the chief care of man in a ſtate of ſociety; and was therefore the firſt in which Julia and her huſband united. When they began houſe-keeping, they examined into the ſtate of their fortunes; not conſidering ſo much whether they were proportioned to their rank, as to their wants; and ſeeing they were ſufficient for the proviſion of an honourable family, they had not ſo bad an opinion of their children, as to be fearful, leſt the patrimony they had to leave would not content them. They applied themſelves therefore rather to improve their preſent, than acquire a larger fortune: they placed their money rather ſafely than profitably; and, inſtead of purchaſing new eſtates, ſet about increaſing the value of that which they already had; leaving their own example in this point, as the only treaſure by which they would deſire to ſee the inheritance of their offſpring increaſed.

It is true, that an eſtate which is not augmented, is liable to many accidents by which it will naturally diminiſh: but if this were a ſufficient motive to begin increaſing, when could it

it ceaſe to be a pretext for a conſtant augmentation? Muſt it be divided among ſeveral children? Be it ſo: but muſt they be all idle? will not the induſtry of each be a ſupplement to his ſhare? and ought it not to be conſidered in the partition? It is thus that inſatiable avarice makes its way under the maſk of prudence, and leads to vice under the pretext of only ſeeking its own ſecurity. It is in vain, ſays Mr Wolmar, to attempt to give to human affairs that ſtability which is not in their nature. Reaſon itſelf requires that we ſhould leave many things to chance; and if our lives and fortunes depend ſo much on accident, what a folly is it to make ourſelves really unhappy, in order to prevent doubtful evils, or avoid inevitable dangers? The only precaution he took was, to live one whole year on his principal, in order to have ſo much beforehand to receive of the intereſt, ſo that he had always the yearly product of his eſtate at command. He choſe rather to diminiſh his capital, than to be perpetually under the neceſſity of dunning for his rents; the conſequence of which has been in the end advantageous to him, as it prevented him from borrowing, and other ruinous expedients, to which many people are obliged to have recourſe on every unforeſeen accident. Thus good management ſupplies the place of parſimony, and he is in fact a gainer by what he has ſpent.

The maſter of this houſe poſſeſſes but a moderate fortune, according to the eſtimation of the world; but in reality I hardly know any body more opulent. There is indeed no ſuch thing as abſolute wealth: that term ſignifying

only the relation between the wants and poſſeſſions of thoſe who are rich. One man is rich, though poſſeſſing only an acre of land; another is a beggar in the midſt of heaps of gold. Luxury and caprice have no bounds, and make more perſons poor than real wants. But the proportion between their wants and their abilities of ſupplying them, is here eſtabliſhed on a ſure foundation, namely, the perfect harmony ſubſiſting between the huſband and wife: the former taking upon him the charge of collecting the rents and profits of his eſtate; and the latter, that of regulating their expences; and on this harmony their wealth depends.

What ſtruck me moſt in this houſe at firſt, was, that there appeared ſo much eaſe, freedom, and gaiety, in the midſt of order and diligence; the great fault of well-regulated houſes being, that they always wear an air of gloomineſs and reſtraint. The extreme ſolicitude alſo of the heads of the family looks too much like avarice. Every thing about them ſeems conſtrained; and there appears ſomething ſervile in their punctuality, which renders it intolerable. The domeſtics do their duty indeed; but then they do it with an air of diſcontent and miſtruſt. The gueſts, it is true, are well received; but they dare not make uſe of a freedom cautiouſly beſtowed, and are always afraid of doing ſomething that will be reckoned a breach of regularity. Such ſlaviſh fathers of families cannot be ſaid to live for themſelves, but for their children; without conſidering that they are not only fathers but men, and that they ought to ſet their

their children an example how to live prudent and happy.

More judicious maxims are adopted here. Mr Wolmar thinks one of the principal duties of a father of a family is to make his houſe, in the firſt place, agreeable, that his children may delight in their home; and that, ſeeing their father happy, they may be tempted to tread in his footſteps. Another of his maxims, and which he often repeats, is, that the gloomy and fordid lives of fathers and mothers are almoſt always the firſt cauſe of the ill conduct of children.

As to Julia, who never had any other guide, and who needed no better, than her own heart, ſhe obeys, without ſcruple, its dictates; being then certain of doing right. Can a mind ſo ſuſceptible as her's be inſenſible to pleaſure? On the contrary, ſhe delights in every amuſement, nor refuſes to join in any diverſion that promiſes to be agreeable; but her pleaſures are the pleaſures of Julia. She neglects neither her own convenience, nor the ſatisfaction of thoſe who are dear to her. She eſteems nothing ſuperfluous that may contribute to the happineſs of a ſenſible mind; but cenſures every thing as ſuch that ſerves only to make a figure in the eyes of others; ſo that you will find in this houſe all the gratifications which luxury and pleaſure can beſtow, without refinement or effeminacy. With reſpect to magnificence and pomp, you will ſee no more of it than ſhe was obliged to ſubmit to in order to pleaſe her father; her own taſte, however, prevails even here, which conſiſts in giving to every thing leſs brilliancy and ſhew,

than grace and elegance. When I talk to her of the methods which are daily invented at Paris and London to hang the coaches eaſier, ſhe does not diſapprove of that; but, when I tell her of the great expence they are at in the varniſhing of them, ſhe can hardly believe or comprehend me; and aſks, if ſuch fine varniſh makes the coaches more commodious. Indeed ſhe ſcruples not to ſay, that I exaggerate a good deal on the ſcandalous paintings with which they now adorn their equipages, inſtead of the coats of arms formerly uſed; as if it were more eligible to be known to the world for a man of licentious manners, than as a man of good family. But ſhe was particularly ſhocked when I told her that the ladies had introduced, and kept up, this cuſtom; and that their chariots were diſtinguiſhable from thoſe of the gentlemen only, by paintings more laſcivious and immodeſt. I was obliged to recount to her an expreſſion of your noble friend's, on this ſubject, which ſhe could hardly digeſt. I was with him one day to look at a vis-a-vis, which happened to be in this taſte. But he no ſooner caſt his eye on the pannels than he turned away from it, telling the owner that he ſhould offer carriages of that kind to wanton women of quality, for that no modeſt man could make uſe of them.

As the firſt ſtep to virtue is to forbear doing ill, ſo the firſt ſtep to happineſs is to be free from pain. Theſe two maxims, which, well underſtood, would render precepts of morality in a great degree uſeleſs, are favourite ones with Mrs Wolmar. She is extremely affected by the miſ-

misfortunes of others; and it would be as difficult for her to be happy with wretched objects about her, as it would be for an innocent man to preserve his virtue and live in the midst of vice. She has none of that barbarous pity, which is satisfied with turning away its eye from the miserable objects it might relieve. On the contrary, she makes it her business to seek out such objects: it is the existence, and not the presence, of the unhappy which gives her affliction. It is not sufficient for her to be ignorant that there are any such; it is necessary to her quiet that she should be assured there are none miserable; at least within her sphere of charity: for it would be unreasonable to extend her concern beyond her own neighbourhood, and to make her happiness depend upon the welfare of all mankind. She takes care to inform herself of the necessities of all that live near her, and interests herself in their relief as if their wants were her own. She knows every one personally; includes them all, as it were, in her family; and spares no pains to banish, or alleviate, the misfortunes and afflictions incident to human life.

I am desirous, my Lord, of profiting by your instructions; but you must forgive me a piece of enthusiasm, of which I am no longer ashamed, and with which you yourself are affected. There will never be another Julia in the world. Providence takes a particular interest in every thing that regards her, nor leaves any thing to the consequence of accident. Heaven seems to have sent her upon earth, to serve at once as an example of that excellence of which

human nature is capable, and of that happineſs it may enjoy in the obſcurity of private life, without having recourſe either to thoſe public virtues which ſometimes raiſe humanity above itſelf, or to thoſe honours with which the breath of popular applauſe rewards them. Her fault, if love be a fault, has ſerved only to diſplay her fortitude and virtue. Her relations, her friends, her ſervants, all happily ſituated, were formed to love her, and be beloved by her. Her country is the only one upon earth where ſhe ought to have been born; to be happy herſelf, it was neceſſary for her to live among a happy people. If, to her misfortune, ſhe had been born among thoſe unhappy wretches, who groan beneath a load of oppreſſion, and ſtruggle in vain againſt the iron hand of cruelty, every complaint of the oppreſſed had poiſoned the ſweets of her life; the common ruin had been her's, and her benevolent heart had made her feel inceſſantly thoſe evils ſhe could not have redreſſed.

Inſtead of that, every thing here animates and ſupports the native goodneſs of her diſpoſition. She has no public calamities to afflict her. She ſees not around her the frightful pictures of indigence and deſpair. The villagers in eaſy circumſtances, have more need of her advice than her bounty *. But, if there be found among them

* There is near Clarens a village called Moutru, the right of common to which is ſufficient to maintain the inhabitants, though they had not a foot of land of their own. For which reaſon, the freedom of that village is almoſt as difficult to be obtained as that of Berne. It is a great pity that ſome honeſt magiſtrate is not appointed to make theſe burghers a little more ſociable, or their burgherſhip leſs dear.

them an orphan too young to earn his ſubſiſtence; an obſcure widow who pines in ſecret indigence; a childiſh father, whoſe hands, enfeebled by age, cannot ſupply him with the means of life; ſhe is not afraid that her bounty will increaſe the public charge, by encouraging idleneſs or knavery. The happineſs ſhe herſelf feels, multiplies and extends itſelf to all around her. Every houſe ſhe enters ſoon becomes a copy of her own: nor are convenience and order only purſued from her example, but harmony and goodneſs become equally the objects of domeſtic management. When ſhe goes abroad, ſhe ſees none but agreeable objects about her; and when ſhe returns home, ſhe is ſaluted by others ſtill more engaging. Her heart is delighted by every proſpect that meets her eyes; and little ſuſceptible as it is of ſelf-love, it is led to love itſelf in the effects of its own benevolence. No, my Lord, I repeat it again; nothing that regards Julia can be indifferent to the cauſe of virtue. Her charms, her talents, her taſte, her conflicts, her errors, her afflictions, her abode, her friends, her family, her pains, her pleaſures, every thing, in ſhort, that compleats her deſtiny, compoſe a life without example; ſuch as few women would chuſe to imitate, and yet ſuch as all, in ſpite of themſelves, muſt admire.

What pleaſes me moſt, in the ſolicitude which prevails here regarding the happineſs of others, is, that their benevolence is always exerted with prudence, and is never abuſed. We do not always ſucceed in our benevolent intentions; but, on the contrary, ſome people imagine

gine they are doing great ſervices, who are, in reality, doing great injuries; and, with a view to a little manifeſt good, are guilty of much unforeſeen evil. Mrs Wolmar indeed poſſeſſes, in an eminent degree, a qualification very rare, even among women of the beſt character; I mean, an exquiſite diſcernment in the diſtribution of her favours, and that as well in the choice of means to render them really uſeful, as of the perſons on whom they are beſtowed. She has laid down certain rules for her conduct in this reſpect, from which ſhe never deviates. She knows how to grant, or refuſe, every thing that is aſked of her, without betraying the leaſt weakneſs in her compliance, or caprice in her denial. Whoever hath committed one infamous or wicked action, hath nothing to hope for from her but juſtice, and her pardon if he has offended her; but never that favour and protection, which ſhe can beſtow on a worthier object. I heard her once refuſe a favour, which depended on herſelf only, to a man of this ſtamp. "I "wiſh you happy," ſaid ſhe to him coldly, "but I ſhall not contribute any thing to make "you ſo, leſt I ſhould put it in your power to "injure others. There are too many honeſt "people in the world, who require relief, for "me to think of aſſiſting you." It is true this piece of juſt ſeverity coſt her dear, and it is but ſeldom ſhe has occaſion to exerciſe it. Her maxim is, to look upon all thoſe as deſerving people, of whoſe demerits ſhe is not fully convinced; and there are few perſons weak and wicked enough not to evade the full proofs of their guilt. She has none of that indolent cha-

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rity of the wealthy, who give money to the miſerable to be excuſed from attending to their diſtreſs; and know how to anſwer their petitions only by giving alms. Her purſe is not inexhauſtible; and ſince ſhe is become the mother of a family, ſhe regulates it with more œconomy. Of all the kinds of relief we may afford to the unhappy, the giving alms is certainly that which coſts us leaſt trouble; but it is alſo the moſt tranſitory and leaſt ſerviceable to the object relieved: Julia does not ſeek to get rid of ſuch objects, but to be uſeful to them.

Neither does ſhe grant her recommendation, or exert her good offices, without firſt knowing whether the uſe intended to be made of her intereſt be juſt and reaſonable. Her protection is never refuſed to any one who really ſtands in need of and deſerves to obtain it: but for thoſe who deſire to raiſe themſelves through ficklenefs or ambition only, ſhe can very ſeldom be prevailed upon to give herſelf any trouble. The natural buſineſs of man is to cultivate the earth, and ſubſiſt on its produce. The peaceful inhabitant of the country needs only to know in what happineſs conſiſts, to be happy. All the real pleaſures of humanity are within his reach; he feels only thoſe pains which are inſeparable from it, and which to the man who ſeeks to remove, will only be changed for others more ſevere. His ſituation is the only neceſſary, the only uſeful one in life. He is never unhappy, but when others tyrannize over him, or ſeduce him by their vices. In agriculture and huſbandry conſiſts the real proſperity of a country, the greatneſs and ſtrength which a people derive from

from themſelves, that which depends not on other nations, which is not obliged to attack others for its own preſervation, but is productive of the ſureſt means of its own defence. In making an eſtimate of the ſtrength of a nation, a ſuperficial obſerver would viſit the court, the prince, his poſts, his troops, his magazines, and his fortified towns; but the true politician would take a ſurvey of the country, and viſit the cottages of the huſbandmen. The former would only ſee what is already executed, but the latter what was capable of being put into execution.

On this principle they proceed here, and yet more ſo at Etange: they contribute as much as poſſible to make the peaſants happy in their condition, without ever aſſiſting them to change it. The better as well as the poorer ſort of people are equally deſirous of ſending their children to the cities; the one, that they may ſtudy and become gentlemen; the others, that they may find employment, and ſo eaſe their parents of the charge of maintaining them. The young people, on their part, have curioſity, and are generally fond of roving: the girls aſpire to the dreſs and finery of the citizens; and the boys, moſt of them, go into foreign ſervice, thinking it better to return with the haughty and mean air of mercenaries, and a ridiculous contempt of their former condition, than with that love for their country and liberty which honourably diſtinguiſhed their progenitors. It is the care of this benevolent family to remonſtrate againſt theſe miſtaken prejudices, to repreſent to the peaſants the danger of their childrens principles; the

the ill conſequences of ſending them from home, and the continual riſques they run of loſing their life, fortune, and morals, where a thouſand are ruined for one who does well. If after all they continue obſtinate, they are left, at their own indiſcretion, to run into vice and miſery; and the care, which was thrown away on them, is turned upon thoſe who have liſtened to reaſon. This is exerted in teaching them to honour their native condition, by ſeeming to honour it ourſelves: we do not converſe with peaſants, indeed, in the ſtyle of courts; but we treat them with a grave and diſtant familiarity, which, without raiſing any one out of his ſtation, teaches them to reſpect ours. There is not one honeſt labourer in the village, who does not riſe greatly in his own eſtimation, when an opportunity offers of our ſhewing the difference of our behaviour to him, and to ſuch petty viſitants, who come home to make a figure, for a day or two, and to eclipſe their relations. Mr Wolmar and the Baron, when he is here, ſeldom fail of being preſent at the exerciſes and reviews of the militia of the village and parts adjacent: their preſence has a great effect on the youth of the country, who are naturally of a martial and ſpirited temper, and are extremely delighted to ſee themſelves honoured with the preſence of veteran officers. They are ſtill prouder of their own merit, when they ſee ſoldiers retired from foreign ſervice leſs expert than themſelves: yet this they often do; for, do what you will, five pence a-day, and the fear of being caned, will never produce that emulation which may be excited in a free man under

under arms, by the preſence of his relations, his neighbours, his friends, his miſtreſs, and the honour of his country.

The great maxim with Mrs Wolmar, therefore, is, never to encourage any one to change his condition, but to contribute all in her power to make every one happy in his preſent ſtation; being particularly ſolicitous to prevent the happieſt of all ſituations, that of a peaſant in a free ſtate, from being deſpiſed in favour of other employments.

I once made an objection on this ſubject, founded on the different talents which nature ſeems to have beſtowed on mankind, in order to fit them for different occupations, without any regard to their birth. To this ſhe anſwered, that there were two more material things to be conſulted, before talents; namely, virtue and happineſs. Man, ſaid ſhe, is too noble a being to be made a mere tool of for the uſe of others: he ought not to be employed in what he is fit for, without conſulting how far ſuch employment is fit for him; for we are not made for our ſtations, but our ſtations for us. In the right diſtribution of things, therefore, we ſhould not ſeek that employment for which a man is beſt adapted, but that which is beſt adapted to make him virtuous and happy. For it can never be right to deſtroy one human ſoul for the temporal advantage of others, nor to make any man a villain for the uſe of honeſt people.

Now, out of a thouſand perſons, who leave their native villages, there are not ten of them but what are ſpoiled by going to town, and become even more profligate than thoſe who initiate

tiate them into vice. Thoſe, who ſucceed and make their fortunes, frequently compaſs it by baſe and diſhoneſt means; while the unſucceſsful, inſtead of returning to their former occupation, rather chuſe to turn beggars and thieves. But, ſuppoſing that one out of the thouſand reſiſts the contagion of example, and perſeveres in the ſentiments of honeſty, do you think that, upon the whole, his life is as happy as it might have been in the tranquil obſcurity of his firſt condition?

To purſue one's genius, it is neceſſary firſt to know it. And is it an eaſy matter to diſcover the talents with which nature hath ſeverally endowed us? So far otherwiſe, that it is very difficult to diſtinguiſh thoſe of young perſons the beſt educated and moſt attentively obſerved: how then ſhall a peaſant, meanly bred, preſume to judge of his own? There is nothing ſo equivocal as the genius frequently attributed to youth; the ſpirit of imitation has often a greater ſhare in it than natural ability, and very often it depends more on accident than a determined inclination; nor does even inclination itſelf always determine the capacity. Real talents, or true genius, are attended with a certain ſimplicity of diſpoſition, which makes it leſs reſtleſs and enterpriſing, leſs ready to thruſt itſelf forward than a ſuperficial and falſe one; which is nevertheleſs generally miſtaken for the true, and conſiſts only in a vain deſire of making a figure without talents to ſupport it. One of theſe geniuſes hears the drum beat, and is immediately in idea a general; another ſees a palace building, and directly commences architect.

Thus Guſtin, my gardener, from ſeeing ſome of my works, muſt needs learn to draw. I ſent him to Lauſanne to a maſter, and he imagines himſelf already a fine painter.

The opportunity, and the deſire of preferment, generally determine mens profeſſion. But it is not enough to be ſenſible of the bent of our genius, unleſs we are willing to purſue it. Will a prince turn coachman, becauſe he is expert at driving a ſet of horſes? Will a duke turn cook, becauſe he is ingenious at inventing ragouts? Our talents all tend to preferment; no one pretends to thoſe which would fit him for an inferior ſtation. Do you think this is agreeable to the order of nature? Suppoſe every one ſenſible of his own talents, and as willing to employ them, how is it poſſible? How could they ſurmount ſo many obſtacles? How could they overcome ſo many unworthy competitors? He, who finds in himſelf the want of abilities, would call in ſubtilty and intrigue to his aid; and thereby frequently become an overmatch for others of greater capacity and ſincerity. Have you not told me yourſelf a hundred times, that the many eſtabliſhments in favour of the arts have only been of prejudice to them? In multiplying indiſcreetly the number of profeſſors and academicians, true merit is loſt in the crowd; and the honours, due to the moſt ingenious, are always beſtowed on the moſt intriguing. If there exiſted, indeed, a ſociety, wherein the rank and employment of its reſpective members were exactly calculated to their talents and perſonal merit, every one might there aſpire to the place he ſhould be moſt fit for; but it is neceſ-

ſary to conduct ourſelves by other rules, and give up that of abilities, ſince the vileſt of all talents is the only one that ſurely leads to fortune.

I will add further, continued ſhe, that I cannot conceive the utility of having ſo many different talents diſplayed. It ſeems neceſſary, the number of perſons ſo qualified ſhould be exactly proportioned to the wants of ſociety: now if thoſe only were appointed to cultivate the earth who ſhould have eminent talents for agriculture, or if all thoſe were taken from that employment who might be found more proper for ſome other, there would not remain a ſufficient number of labourers to furniſh the common neceſſaries of life. I am apt to think, therefore, that great talents in men are like great virtues in drugs, which nature has provided to cure our maladies, though its intention certainly was that we ſhould never ſtand in need of them. In the vegetable creation there are plants which are poiſonous: in the brutal, animals that would tear us to pieces; and among mankind there are thoſe who poſſeſs talents no leſs deſtructive to their ſpecies. Beſides, if every thing were to be put to that uſe for which its qualities ſeem beſt adapted, it might be productive of more harm than good in the world. There are thouſands of ſimple honeſt people, who have no occaſion for a diverſity of great talents; ſupporting themſelves better by their ſimplicity, than others with all their ingenuity. But, in proportion as their morals are corrupted, their talents are diſplayed, as if to ſerve as a ſupplement to the virtues they have loſt, and to oblige the vicious to be uſeful in ſpite of themſelves.

Another ſubject, on which we differed, was the relieving of beggars. As we live near a public road, great numbers are conſtantly paſſing by; and it is the cuſtom of the houſe to give to every one that aſks. I repreſented to her, that this practice was not only throwing that money away, which might be charitably beſtowed on perſons in real want; but that it tended to multiply beggars and vagabonds, who take pleaſure in that idle life, and, by rendering themſelves a burthen to ſociety, deprive it of their labour.

I ſee very well, ſays ſhe, you have imbibed prejudices, by living in great cities, and ſome of thoſe maxims by which your complaiſant reaſoners love to flatter the hard-heartedneſs of the wealthy: you make uſe of their very expreſſions. Do you think to degrade a poor wretch below a human being, by giving him the contemptuous name of beggar? Compaſſionate as you really are, how could you ſuffer yourſelf to make uſe of it? Repeat it no more, my friend, it does not come well from your lips: it is more diſhonourable for the cruel man by whom it is uſed, than for the unhappy wretch who bears it. I will not pretend to decide whether thoſe, who thus inveigh againſt the giving alms, are right or wrong; but this I know, that Mr Wolmar, whoſe good ſenſe is not inferior to that of your philoſophers, and who has frequently told me of the arguments they uſe to ſuppreſs their natural compaſſion and ſenſibility, has always appeared to deſpiſe them, and has never diſapproved of my conduct. His own argument is ſimple. We permit, ſays he, we even ſupport at a great expence, a multitude of uſeleſs profeſſions, many

of

of which ſerve only to ſpoil and corrupt our manners. Now, to look upon the profeſſion of a beggar as a trade, ſo far are we from having any reaſon to fear the like bad conſequences from the exerciſe of it, that, on the contrary, it ſerves to excite in us thoſe ſentiments of humanity which ought to unite all mankind. Again, if we look upon begging as a talent, why ſhould I not reward the eloquence of a beggar, who has art enough to excite my compaſſion, and induce me to relieve him, as well as I do a comedian, who on the ſtage makes me ſhed a few fruitleſs tears? If the one makes me admire the good actions of others, the other induces me to do a good action myſelf: all, that we feel at the repreſentation of a tragedy, goes off as ſoon as we come out of the playhouſe; but the remembrance of the unhappy object we have relieved gives continual pleaſure. It may be urged, that a great number of beggars are burthenſome to a ſtate: but of how many profeſſions, which are tolerated and encouraged, may we not ſay the ſame? It belongs to the legiſlature and adminiſtration to take care there ſhould be no beggars; but, in order to make them lay down their trade *, is it neceſſary to make all other ranks

* To give to beggars, ſay ſome people, is to raiſe a nurſery of thieves: though it is, on the contrary, to prevent their becoming ſuch. I allow that the poor ought not to be encouraged to turn beggars; but, when once they are ſo, they ought to be ſupported, leſt they ſhould turn robbers. Nothing induces people to change their profeſſion ſo much as their not being able to live by it: now thoſe, who have once experienced the lazy life of a beggar, get ſuch an averſion to work, that they had rather go upon the highway, at the hazard of their necks, than

of people inhuman and unnatural? For my part, continued Julia, without knowing what the poor may be to the ſtate, I know they are all my brethren; and that I cannot, without thinking myſelf inexcuſable, refuſe them the ſmall relief they aſk of me. The greater part of them, I own, are vagabonds; but I know too much of life, to be ignorant how many misfortunes may reduce an honeſt man to ſuch a ſituation; and how can I be ſure, that an unhappy ſtranger, who comes, in the name of God, to implore my aſſiſtance, and to beg a morſel of bread, is not ſuch an honeſt man ready to periſh for want, and whom my refuſal may drive to deſpair? The alms I diſtribute at the door are of no great value. A halfpenny and a piece of bread are refuſed to nobody; and twice the proportion is always given to ſuch as are maimed, or otherwiſe evidently incapable of labour. Should they meet with the ſame relief at every houſe, which can afford it, it would be ſufficient to ſupport them on their journey; and that is all a needy traveller has a right to expect. But, ſuppoſing this was not enough to yield them any real help, it is at leaſt a proof that we take ſome part in their di-

than betake themſelves again to labour. A farthing is ſoon aſked for and ſoon refuſed; but twenty farthings might provide a ſupper for a poor man, whom twenty refuſals might exaſperate to deſpair: and who is there who would ever refuſe ſo ſlight a gift, if he reflected that he might thereby be the means of ſaving two men, the one from theft, and perhaps the other from being murdered? I have ſomewhere read that beggars are a kind of vermin that hang about the wealthy. It is natural for children to cling about their parents; but the rich, like cruel parents, diſown theirs, and leave them to be maintained by each other.

diſtreſs, a ſort of ſalutation that ſoftens the rigour of refuſing them more. A halfpenny and a morſel of bread coſt little more, and are a more civil anſwer, than a mere *God help you;* which is too often the only thing beſtowed, as if the gifts of providence were not placed in the hands of men, or that heaven had any other ſtore on earth than what is laid up in the coffers of the rich. In ſhort, whatever we ought to think of ſuch unfortunate wretches, and though nothing ſhould in juſtice be given to common beggars, we ought at leaſt, out of reſpect to ourſelves, to take ſome notice of ſuffering humanity, and not harden our hearts at the ſight of a miſerable fellow-creature.

In this manner I behave to thoſe, who, without any other ſubterfuge or pretext, come openly a-begging. With reſpect to ſuch as pretend to be workmen, and complain for want of employment, we have here tools of almoſt every kind for them, and we ſet them to work. By this means we aſſiſt them, and put their induſtry to the proof; a circumſtance which is now ſo well-known, that the lazy cheat never comes again to the gate.

It is thus, my Lord, this angelic creature always deduces ſomething from her own virtues, to combat thoſe vain ſubtilties by which people of cruel diſpoſitions palliate their vices. The ſolicitude and pains ſhe takes to relieve the poor, are alſo ranked among her amuſements, and take up great part of the time ſhe can ſpare from her moſt important duties. After having performed her duty to others, ſhe then thinks of herſelf; and the means ſhe takes to render life agree-

agreeable may be reckoned among her virtues: ſo commendable are her conſtant motives of action, that moderation and good ſenſe are always mixed with her pleaſures! She is ambitious to pleaſe her huſband, who always delights in ſeeing her chearful and gay; ſhe is deſirous of inſtilling into her children a taſte for innocent pleaſures, wherein moderation, order, and ſimplicity prevail, and ſecure the heart from the violence of impetuous paſſions. She amuſes herſelf, therefore, to divert them, as the dove ſoftens the grain to nouriſh the young ones.

Julia's mind and body are equally ſenſible. The ſame delicacy prevails as well in her ſenſes as her ſentiments. She was formed to know and taſte every pleaſure. Virtue having been long eſteemed by her as the moſt refined of all delights, in the peaceful enjoyment of that ſupreme pleaſure, ſhe debars herſelf of none that are conſiſtent with it; but then her method of enjoyment reſembles the auſterity of ſelf-denial: not indeed of that afflicting and painful ſelf-denial, which is hurtful to nature, and which its author rejects as ridiculous homage; but of that ſlight and moderate reſtraint, by which the empire of reaſon is preſerved; and which ſerves as a whet to pleaſure by preventing diſguſt. She will have it, that every thing which pleaſes the ſenſe, and is not neceſſary to life, changes its nature, whenever it becomes habitual; that it ceaſes to be pleaſant in becoming needful; that we thus by habit lay ourſelves at once under a needleſs reſtraint, and deprive ourſelves of a real pleaſure; and that the art of ſatisfying our deſires lies not in indulging, but in ſuppreſſing, them.

them. The method ſhe takes to enhance the pleaſures of the leaſt amuſement, is to deny herſelf the uſe of it twenty times for once that ſhe enjoys it. Thus her mind preſerves its firſt vigour; her taſte is not ſpoiled by uſe; ſhe has no need to excite it by exceſs; and I have often ſeen her take exquiſite delight in a childiſh diverſion, which would have been inſipid to any other perſon on earth.

A ſtill nobler object, which ſhe propoſes to herſelf from the exerciſe of this virtue, is that of remaining always miſtreſs of herſelf, and thereby to accuſtom her paſſions to obedience, and to ſubject her inclinations to rule. This is a new way to be happy; for it is certain that we enjoy nothing with ſo little diſquietude, as what we can part from without pain; and if the philoſopher be happy, it is becauſe he is the man from whom fortune can take the leaſt.

But what appears to me the moſt ſingular in her moderation, is, that ſhe purſues it for the very ſame reaſons which hurry the voluptuous into exceſs. Life is indeed ſhort, ſays ſhe, which is a reaſon for enjoying it to the end, and managing its duration in ſuch a manner as to make the moſt of it. If one day's indulgence and ſatiety deprives us of a whole year's taſte for enjoyment, it is bad philoſophy to purſue our deſires ſo far as they may be ready to lead us, without conſidering whether we may not out-live our faculties, and our hearts be exhauſted before our time. I ſee that our common epicures, in order to let ſlip no opportunity of enjoyment, loſe all; and, perpetually anxious in the midſt of pleaſures, can find no enjoyment in any.

any. They laviſh away the time of which they think they are œconomiſts, and ruin themſelves, like miſers, by knowing how to give any thing away. For my part, I hold the oppoſite maxim; and ſhould prefer, in this caſe, rather too much ſeverity than relaxation. It ſometimes happens that I break up a party of pleaſure, for no other reaſon than that it is too agreeable; and by repeating it another time, have the ſatisfaction of enjoying it twice.

Upon ſuch principles are the ſweets of life, and the pleaſures of mere amuſement, regulated here. Amidſt her various application to the ſeveral branches of her domeſtic employment, Julia takes particular care that the kitchen is not neglected. Her table is ſpread with abundance; but it is not the deſtructive abundance of fantaſtic luxury: all the viands are common, but excellent, in their kind; the cookery is ſimple, but exquiſite. All that conſiſts in appearance only, whoſe nicety depends on the faſhion, all your delicate and far-fetched diſhes, whoſe ſcarcity is their only value, are baniſhed from the table of Julia. Among the moſt delicious alſo of thoſe which are admitted, they daily abſtain from ſome; which they reſerve in order to give an air of feſtivity to thoſe meals for which they were intended, and which are thereby rendered more agreeable, without being more coſtly. But of what kind, think you, are theſe diſhes which are ſo carefully huſbanded? Choice game? Sea-fiſh? Foreign produce? No. Something better than all that. They are perhaps a particular choice ſallad of the country; fine greens of our own gardens; fiſh of the lake,

dreſſed

dreſſed in a peculiar manner; cheeſe from the mountains; a German paſty, or game caught by ſome of the domeſtics. The table is ſerved in a modeſt and rural but agreeable manner, chearfulneſs and gratitude crowning the whole. Your gilt covers, round which the gueſts ſit ſtarving with hunger; your pompous glaſſes, ſtuck out with flowers for the deſert, are never introduced here, to take up the place intended for victuals; we are entirely ignorant of the art of ſatisfying hunger by the eye. But then no where do they ſo well know how to add welcome to good cheer, to eat a good deal without eating too much, to drink chearfully without intoxication, to ſit ſo long at table, without being tired, and to riſe from it without diſguſt. On the firſt floor there is a little dining-room, different from that in which we uſually dine, which is on the ground-floor. This room is built in the corner of the houſe, and has windows in two aſpects: thoſe on one ſide overlook the garden, beyond which we have a proſpect of the lake between the trees: on the other ſide, we have a fine view of a ſpacious vineyard, that begins to diſplay the golden harveſt which we ſhall reap in about two months. The room is ſmall, but ornamented with every thing that can render it pleaſant and agreeable. It is here Julia gives her little entertainments to her father, to her huſband, to her couſin, to me, to herſelf, and ſometimes to her children. When ſhe orders the table to be ſpread there, we know immediately the deſign; and Mr Wolmar has given it the name of the Saloon of Apollo: but this ſaloon differs no leſs from that of Lucullus,

in

in the choice of the perſons entertained, than in that of the entertainment. Common gueſts are not admitted into it: we never dine there, when there are any ſtrangers: it is the inviolable aſylum of mutual confidence, friendſhip, and liberty. The ſociety of hearts is there joined to the ſocial bond of the table; the entrance into it is a kind of initiation into the myſteries of a cordial intimacy; nor do any perſons ever meet there, but ſuch as wiſh never to be ſeparated. We wait impatiently for you, my Lord, who are to dine the very firſt day in the Apollo.

I was not at firſt admitted to that honour; it was reſerved for me till after my return from Mrs Orbe's. Not that I imagined they could add any thing to the obliging reception I met with on my arrival; but the ſupper, made for me there, gave me other ideas. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the delightful mixture of familiarity, chearfulneſs, and ſocial eaſe, which I then experienced, and had never before taſted in my whole life. I found myſelf more at liberty, without being told to aſſume it, and we ſeemed even to underſtand one another much better than before. The abſence of the domeſtics, who were diſmiſſed from their attendance, removed that reſerve which I ſtill felt at heart; and it was then that I firſt, at the inſtance of Julia, reſumed the cuſtom I had laid aſide for many years, of drinking wine after meals.

This ſupper quite enchanted me, and I wiſhed that all our meals might have been made in the ſame manner. I knew nothing of this delightful room, ſaid I to Mrs Wolmar; why do not

not you always eat here? See, replied ſhe, how pretty it is! Would it not be a pity to ſpoil it? This anſwer ſeemed too much out of character for me not to ſuſpect ſhe had ſome farther meaning. But why, added I, have you not the ſame conveniences below, that the ſervants might be ſent away, and leave us to talk more at liberty? That, replied ſhe, would be too agreeable, and the trouble of being always at eaſe is the greateſt in the world. I immediately comprehended her ſyſtem by this, and concluded that her art of managing her pleaſures conſiſted in being ſparing of them.

I obſerve ſhe dreſſes herſelf with more care than formerly. The only piece of vanity I ever reproached her for, was that of neglecting her dreſs. The haughty fair-one had her reaſons, and left me no pretext to diſown her power. But, do all ſhe could, my enchantment was too ſtrong for me to think it natural; I was too obſtinate in attributing her negligence to art. Not that the power of her charms is diminiſhed; but ſhe now diſdains to exert it; and I ſhould be apt to ſay, ſhe affected a greater neatneſs in her dreſs, that ſhe might appear only a pretty woman, had I not diſcovered the reaſon for her preſent ſolicitude in this point. During the two firſt or three days I was miſtaken; for, not reflecting that ſhe was dreſſed in the ſame manner at my arrival, which was unexpected, I thought ſhe had done it out of reſpect to me. I was undeceived, however, in the abſence of Mr Wolmar. For the next day ſhe was not attired with that elegance, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed her

the preceding evening, nor with that affecting and voluptuous ſimplicity which formerly inchanted me; but with a certain modeſty that ſpeaks through the eyes to the heart, that inſpires reſpect only, and to which beauty itſelf but gives additional authority. The dignity of wife and mother appeared in all her charms; the timid and affectionate looks ſhe caſt on me, were now mixed with an air of gravity and grandeur, which ſeemed to caſt a vail over her features. In the mean time, ſhe betrayed not the leaſt alteration in her behaviour; her equality of temper, her candor knew nothing of affectation. She practiſed only a talent natural to her ſex, to change ſometimes our ſentiments and ideas of them, by a different dreſs, by a cap of this form, or a gown of that colour. The day on which ſhe expected her huſband's return, ſhe again found the art of adorning her natural charms without hiding them; ſhe came from her toilet indeed a dazzling beauty, and I ſaw ſhe was not leſs capable to outſhine the moſt ſplendid dreſs, than to adorn the moſt ſimple. I could not help being vexed, when I reflected on the cauſe of her preparation.

This taſte for ornament extends itſelf, from the miſtreſs of the houſe, through all the family. The maſter, the children, the ſervants, the equipage, the building, the garden, the furniture, are all ſet off, and kept in ſuch order, as ſhews what they are capable of,. though magnificence, is deſpiſed :—I do not mean true magnificence, and which conſiſts leſs in the expence, than in the good order and noble diſpoſition of things

things *. For my own part, I muſt confeſs it appears to me a more grand and noble ſight, to ſee a ſmall number of people happy in themſelves, and in each other, in a plain modeſt family, than to ſee the moſt ſplendid palace filled with tumult and diſcord, and every one of its inhabitants taking advantage of the general diſorder, and building up their own fortunes and happineſs on the ruin of another. A well governed private family forms a ſingle object, agreeable and delightful to contemplate; whereas, in a riotous palace, we ſee only a confuſed aſſemblage of various objects, whoſe connection and dependence are merely apparent. At firſt ſight, indeed, they ſeem operating to one common end; but a nearer examination ſoon undeceives us.

To conſult only our moſt natural impreſſions, it ſeems, that, to deſpiſe luxury and parade, we need leſs of moderation than of taſte. Symmetry and regularity are pleaſing to every eye. The picture of eaſe and happineſs muſt affect every heart: but a vain pomp, which relates neither to regularity nor happineſs, and has for its object only the deſire of making a figure in the

* This appears to me indiſputable. There is true magnificence in the proportion and ſymmetry of the parts of a great palace; but there is none in a confuſed heap of irregular buildings. There is a magnificence in the uniformity of a regiment in battalia; but none in the crowd of people, that ſtand gazing on them, although perhaps there is not a man among them whoſe apparel is not of more value than thoſe of any individual ſoldier. In a word, magnificence is nothing more than a grand ſcene of regularity, whence it comes to paſs, that, of all ſights imaginable, the moſt magnificent are thoſe of nature.

eyes of others, however favourable an idea it may excite in us of the perſon who diſplays it, can give little pleaſure to the ſpectator. But what is taſte? Does not a hundred times more taſte appear in the order and conſtruction of plain and ſimple things, than in thoſe which are overloaded with finery? What is convenience? Is any thing in the world more inconvenient than pomp and pageantry *? What is grandeur? It is preciſely the contrary. When I ſee the intention of an architect to build a large palace, I immediately aſk myſelf why it is not larger? Why does not the man, who keeps fifty ſervants, if he aims at grandeur, keep an hundred? That fine ſilver plate, why is it not gold? The man who gilds his chariot, why does he not alſo gild the ceiling of his apartment? If his ceilings are gilt, why does he not gild the roof too? He, who was deſirous of building an high tower,

* The noiſe of people in a houſe of diſtinction continually diſturbs the quiet of the maſter of it. It is impoſſible for him to conceal any thing from ſo many arguſes. A crowd of creditors make him pay dear for that of his admirers. His apartments are generally ſo large and ſplendid, that he is obliged to betake himſelf to a cloſet, that he may ſleep at eaſe, and his monkey is often better lodged than himſelf. If he would dine, it depends on his cook, and not on his appetite; if he would go abroad, he lies at the mercy of his horſes. A thouſand embarraſſments ſtop him in the ſtreets; he is impatient to be where he is going, but knows not the uſe of his legs. His miſtreſs expects him; but the dirty pavement frightens him, and the weight of his laced coat oppreſſes him, ſo that he cannot walk twenty paces. Hence he loſes, indeed, the opportunity of ſeeing his miſtreſs; but he is well repaid by the by-ſtanders for the diſappointment, every one remarking his equipage, admiring it, and ſaying aloud to the next perſon, There goes Mr Such-a-one!

tower, was right in his intention to raiſe it up to heaven; otherwiſe it was to no purpoſe to build, as the point where he might laſt ſtop, would only ſerve to ſhew, at the greater diſtance, his want of ability. O man! vain and feeble creature! ſhew me thy power, and I will ſhew thee thy miſery.

On the other hand, a regularity in the diſpoſal of things, every one of which is of real life, not only preſents an agreeable proſpect, but as it pleaſes the eye, at the ſame time gives content to the heart. For a man views them always in a pleaſing light, as relating to, and ſufficient for, himſelf. The picture of his own wants of weakneſs does not appear, nor does the chearful proſpect affect him with ſorrowful reflections. I defy any ſenſible man to contemplate, for an hour, the palace of a prince, and the pomp which reigns there, without falling into melancholy reflections, and bemoaning the lot of humanity. But the proſpect of this houſe, with the uniform and ſimple life of its inhabitants, diffuſe over the mind of the ſpectator a ſecret pleaſure, which is perpetually increaſing. A ſmall number of good-natured people, united by their mutual wants and reciprocal benevolence, concur by their different employments in promoting the ſame end; every one finding in his ſituation all that is requiſite to contentment, and not deſiring to change it, applies himſelf as if he thought to ſtay here all his life; the only ambition among them being that of properly diſcharging their reſpective duties. There is ſo much moderation in thoſe who command, and ſo much zeal in thoſe who obey, that equals

might agree to diſtribute the ſame employments among them, without any one having reaſon to complain of his lot. No one envies that of another; no one thinks of augmenting his fortune, but by adding to the common good; the maſter and miſtreſs eſtimating their own happineſs by that of their domeſtics and the people about them. One finds here nothing to add or diminiſh, becauſe here is nothing but what is uſeful, and that indeed is all that is to be found; inſomuch that nothing is wanted which may not be had, and of that there is always a ſufficiency. Suppoſe, now, to all this were added lace, pictures, luſtres, gilding; in a moment you would impoveriſh the ſcene. In ſeeing ſo much abundance in things neceſſary, and no mark of ſuperfluity, one is now apt to think, that if thoſe things which are not here were the objects of choice, they would be had in the ſame abundance. In ſeeing alſo ſo plentiful a proviſion made for the poor, one is led to ſay, This houſe cannot contain its wealth. In my opinion this is true magnificence.

Theſe ſigns of opulence, however, ſurpriſed me, when I firſt heard what fortune muſt ſupport it. You are running yourſelves, ſaid I to Mr and Mrs Wolmar; it is impoſſible ſo moderate a revenue can ſupport ſo much expence. They ſmiled, and ſoon convinced me, that, without retrenching any of their family-expences, they could, if they pleaſed, lay up money and increaſe their eſtate, inſtead of diminiſhing it. Our grand ſecret, to grow rich, ſaid they, is to have as little to do with money as poſſible, and to avoid, as much as may be, thoſe interme-

mediate exchanges, which are made between the harveſt and the conſumption. None of thoſe exchanges are made without ſome loſs; and ſuch loſſes, if multiplied, would reduce a very good eſtate to little or nothing, as by means of brokerage a valuable gold box may fetch in a ſale the price only of a trifling toy. The expence of tranſporting our produce is avoided, by making uſe of ſome part on the ſpot, and that of exchange, by uſing others in their natural ſtate. And as for the indiſpenſible neceſſity of converting thoſe in which we abound for ſuch as we want, inſtead of making pecuniary bargains, we endeavour to make real exchanges, in which the convenience of both parties ſupplies the place of profit.

I conceive, anſwered I, the advantages of this method; but it does not appear to me without inconvenience. For, beſides the trouble to which it muſt ſubject you, the profit muſt be rather apparent than real; and what you loſe in the management of your own eſtate, probably overbalances the profits the farmers would make of you. The peaſants are better œconomiſts, both in the expences of cultivation, and in gathering their produce, than you can be. That is a miſtake, replied Mr Wolmar; the peaſant thinks leſs of augmenting the produce than of ſparing his expences, becauſe the coſt is more difficult for him to raiſe than the profits are uſeful. The tenants view is not ſo much to increaſe the value of the land, as to lay out but little on it; and if he depends on any certain gain, it is leſs by improving the ſoil than exhauſting it. The beſt that can happen, is, that in-

inſtead of exhauſting, he quite neglects it. Thus, for the ſake of a little ready money, gathered in with eaſe, an indolent proprietor prepares for himſelf, or his children, great loſſes, much trouble, and ſometimes the ruin of his patrimony.

I confeſs indeed, (continued Mr Wolmar,) that I am at a much greater expence in the cultivation of my land, than a farmer would be: but then I myſelf reap the profit of his labour, and the culture being much greater than his, my crop is proportionably larger; ſo that, though I am at a greater expence, I am ſtill, upon the whole, a gainer, beſides, this exceſs of expence is only apparent, and is, in reality, productive of great œconomy; for, were we to let out our lands for others to cultivate, we ſhould be ourſelves idle: we muſt live in town, where the neceſſaries of life are dear; we muſt have amuſement, that would coſt us much more than thoſe we take here. The buſineſs, which you call a trouble, is at once our duty and our delight; and, thanks to the regulation it is under, is never troubleſome: on the contrary, it ſerves to employ us, inſtead of thoſe deſtructive ſchemes of pleaſure, which people in town run into, and which a country life prevents, whilſt that which contributes to our happineſs becomes our amuſement.

Caſt your eyes around you, continued he, and you will ſee nothing but what is uſeful; yet all theſe things coſt little, and ſave a world of unneceſſary expence. Our table is furniſhed with nothing but viands of our own growth; our dreſs and furniture are almoſt all compoſed of the manu-

nufactures of the country: nothing is deſpiſed with us becauſe it is common, nor is any thing held in eſteem becauſe it is ſcarce. As every thing, that comes from abroad, is liable to be diſguiſed and adulterated, we confine ourſelves, as well through nicety as moderation, to the choice of the beſt home-commodities, the quality of which is leſs dubious. Our viands are plain, but choice; and nothing is wanting to make ours a ſumptuous table, but the tranſporting it a hundred leagues of; in which caſe every thing would be delicate, every thing would be rare, and even our trouts of the lake would be thought infinitely better, were they to be eaten at Paris.

The ſame rule takes place in the choice of our apparel, which you ſee is not neglected; but its elegance is the only thing we ſtudy, and not its coſt, and much leſs its faſhion. There is a wide difference between the real value of things, and that which they derive only from opinion. The former, however, is all that Julia regards; in chuſing a gown, ſhe inquires not ſo much whether the pattern be old or new, as whether the ſtuff be good and becoming. The novelty of it is even ſometimes the cauſe of her rejecting it, eſpecially when it enhances the price, by giving it an imaginary value.

Conſider further, that the effect of every thing here ariſes leſs from itſelf than from its uſe, and its dependencies; inſomuch that out of parts worth little, Julia has compounded a whole of great value. Taſte delights in creating and ſtamping upon things a value of its own: as the laws of faſhion are inconſtant and ruinous, her's is œconomical and laſting. What true

taſte

taſte once approves, muſt be always good; and though it be ſeldom in the mode, it is, on the other hand, never improper. Thus, in her modeſt ſimplicity, ſhe deduces, from the uſe and fitneſs of things, ſuch ſure and unalterable rules, as will ſtand their ground when the vanity of faſhions is no more.

In fine, the abundance of mere neceſſaries can never degenerate into abuſe; for what is neceſſary has its natural bounds, and our real wants know no exceſs. One may lay out the price of twenty ſuits of cloaths in buying one, and eat up at a meal the income of a whole year; but we cannot wear two ſuits at one time, nor dine twice the ſame day. Thus the caprice of opinion is boundleſs, whereas nature confines us on all ſides; and he, who, with a moderate fortune, contents himſelf with living well, will run no hazard of being ruined.

Thus you ſee, continued the prudent Wolmar, how a little œconomy and induſtry may liſt us out of the reach of fortune. It depends only on ourſelves to increaſe ours, without changing our manner of living; for we advance nothing but with a view of profit, and whatever we expend puts us ſoon in a condition to afford more expence.

And yet, my Lord, nothing of all this appears at firſt ſight: the general air of affluence, and profuſion, hides that order and regularity to which it is owing. One muſt be here ſome time to perceive thoſe ſumptuary laws, which are productive of ſo much eaſe and pleaſure; and it is with difficulty that one at firſt comprehends how they enjoy what they ſpare. On reflection, how-

however, one's ſatisfaction increaſes, becauſe it is plain that the ſource is inexhauſtible, and that the art of enjoying life ſerves at the ſame time to prolong it. How can any one be weary of a ſtate ſo conformable to that of nature? how can he waſte his inheritance by improving it every day? how ruin his fortune, by ſpending only his income? When one year provides for the next, what can diſturb the peace of the preſent? The fruits of their paſt labour ſupport their preſent abundance, and thoſe of their preſent labour provide a future plenty: they enjoy at once what is expended and what is received, and both paſt and future times unite in the ſecurity of the preſent.

I have looked into all the particulars of domeſtic management, and find the ſame ſpirit prevail throughout the whole. All their lace and embroidery are worked in the houſe; all their cloth is ſpun at home, or by poor women ſupported by their charity. Their wool is ſent to the manufactories of the country, from whence they receive cloth, in exchange, for cloathing the ſervants. Their wine, oil, and bread, are all made at home; and they have woods, of which they cut down regularly what is neceſſary for firing. The butcher is paid in cattle, the grocer in corn, for the nouriſhment of his family; the wages of the workmen and the ſervants are paid out of the produce of the lands they cultivate; the rent of their houſes in town ſerves to furniſh thoſe they inhabit in the country; the intereſt of their money in the public funds furniſhes a ſubſiſtence for the maſters, and alſo the little plate they have occaſion for.

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The ſale of the corn and wine, which remain, furniſhes a fund for extraordinary expences; a fund which Julia's prudence will never permit to be exhauſted, and which her charity will not ſuffer to increaſe. She allows for matters of mere amuſement the profits, only, of the labour done in the houſe, of the grubbing up uncultivated land, of planting trees, &c. Thus the produce and the labour always compenſating each other, the balance cannot be diſturbed; and from the nature of things, it cannot be deſtroyed. Moreover, the abſtinence, which Julia impoſes on herſelf, through that voluptuous temperance I have mentioned, is at once productive of new means of pleaſure, and new reſources of œconomy. For example, ſhe is very fond of coffee, and, when her mother was living, drank it every day. But ſhe has left off that practice, in order to heighten her taſte for it, now drinking it only when ſhe has company, or in her favourite dining-room, in order to give her entertainments the air of a treat. This is a little indulgence which is the more agreeable, as it coſts her little, and at the ſame time reſtrains and regulates her appetite. On the contrary, ſhe ſtudies to diſcover and gratify the taſte of her father and huſband with unwearied attention; a charming prodigality which makes them like every thing ſo much the more, for the pleaſure they ſee ſhe takes in providing it. They both love to ſit a little after meals, in the manner of the Swiſs; on which occaſions, particularly after ſupper, ſhe ſeldom fails to treat them with a bottle of wine more old and delicate than common. I was at firſt deceived by the fine names ſhe gave

to her wines, which, in fact, I found to be extremely good; and, drinking them as wines of the growth of the countries whoſe names they bore, I took Julia to taſk for ſo manifeſt a breach of her own maxims; but ſhe laughed at me, and put me in mind of a paſſage in Plutarch, where Flaminius compares the Aſiatic troops of Antiochus, diſtinguiſhed by a thouſand barbarous names, to the ſeveral ragouts under which a friend of his had diſguiſed one and the ſame kind of meat. It is juſt ſo, ſaid ſhe, with theſe foreign wines. The Liſbon, the Sherry, the Malaga, the Champaigne, the Syracuſe, which you have drank here with ſo much pleaſure, are all, in fact, no other than wines of this country, and you ſee from here the vineyard that produced them. If they are inferior in quality to the celebrated wines, whoſe names they bear, they are alſo without their inconveniences; and as one is certain of the materials of which they are compoſed, they may be drank with leſs danger. I have reaſon to believe, continued ſhe, that my father and huſband like them as well as more ſcarce and coſtly wines. Julia's wines, indeed, ſays Mr Wolmar to me, have a taſte which pleaſes us better than any others, and that ariſes from the pleaſure ſhe takes in preparing them. Ah, (returned ſhe,) then they will be always exquiſite.

You will eaſily judge whether, amidſt ſuch a variety of buſineſs, that indolence and want of employment, which make company, viſitings, and ſuch formal ſociety neceſſary, can find any place here. We viſit our neighbours, indeed, juſt enough to keep up an agreeable acquaint-

ance, but too little to be ſlaves to each other's company. Our gueſts are always welcome, but are never invited or intreated. The rule here is to ſee juſt ſo much company as to prevent the loſing a taſte for retirement; rural occupation ſupplying the place of amuſements: and to him who finds an agreeable and peaceful ſociety in his own family, all other company is inſipid. The manner, however, in which we paſs our time, is too ſimple and uniform to tempt many people; but it is the diſpoſition of thoſe who have adopted it, that makes it delightful. How can perſons of a ſound mind be wearied with diſcharging the moſt endearing and pleaſing duties of humanity, and with rendering each other's lives mutually happy? Satisfied every night with the tranſactions of the day, Julia wiſhes for nothing different on the morrow. Her conſtant morning prayer is, that the preſent day may prove like the paſt. She is engaged perpetually in the ſame round of buſineſs, becauſe no alteration would give her more pleaſure. Thus, without doubt, ſhe enjoys all the happineſs of which human life is capable: for is not our being pleaſed with the continuation of our lot a certain ſign that we are happy?

One ſeldom ſees in this place thoſe knots of idle people, which are uſually called good company: but then one beholds thoſe who intereſt our affections infinitely more, ſuch as peaceable peaſants, without art, and without politeneſs; but honeſt, ſimple, and contented in their ſtation: old officers retired from the ſervice; merchants wearied with application to buſineſs, and tired of growing rich; prudent mothers of families,

milies, who bring their children to the ſchool of modeſty and good manners: ſuch is the compa-ny Julia aſſembles about her. To theſe her huſ-band ſometimes adds ſome of thoſe adventurers, reformed by age and experience, who, having purchaſed wiſdom at their own coſt, return with-out reluctance to cultivate their paternal ſoil, which they wiſh they had never left. When any one relates at table the occurrences of their lives, they conſiſt not of the marvellous adven-tures of the wealthy Sindbad, recounting, in the midſt of eaſtern pomp and effeminancy, how he acquired his vaſt wealth. Their tales are the ſimple narratives of men of ſenſe, who, from the caprice of fortune, and the injuſtice of mankind, are diſguſted with the vain purſuit of imaginary happineſs, and have acquired a taſte for the en-joyment of that which is real.

Would you believe that even the converſation of peaſants hath its charms for theſe elevated minds, of whom the philoſopher himſelf might be glad to profit in wiſdom? The judicious Wol-mar diſcovers in their rural ſimplicity more cha-racteriſtical diſtinctions, more men that think for themſelves, than under the uniform maſk worn in great cities, where every one appears what other people are rather than what he is himſelf. The tender Julia finds their hearts ſuſceptible of the ſmalleſt offers of kindneſs, and that they eſteem themſelves happy in the inter-eſt ſhe takes in their happineſs. Neither their hearts nor underſtandings are formed by art; they have not learned to model themſelves after the faſhion, and are leſs the creatures of men than thoſe of nature.

Often, in his rounds, Mr Wolmar picks up ſome honeſt old peaſant, whoſe experience and underſtanding give him great pleaſure. He brings him home to Julia, by whom he is received in a manner which denotes, not her politeneſs, or the dignity of her ſtation, but the benevolence and humanity of her character. The good man is kept to dinner; Julia placing him next herſelf, obligingly helping him, and aſking kindly after his family and affairs. She ſmiles not at his embarraſſment, nor takes notice of the ruſticity of his manners; but by the eaſe of her own behaviour frees him from all reſtraint, maintaining throughout that tender and affectionate reſpect, which is due to an infirm old age, honoured by an irreproachable life. The venerable old man is enraptured, and in the fullneſs of heart, ſeems to experience again the vivacity of youth. In drinking healths to a young and beautiful lady, his half-frozen blood grows warm; and he begins to talk of former times, the days of his youth, his amours, the campaigns he has made, the battles he has been in, of the magnanimity and feats of his fellow-ſoldiers, of his return to his native country, of his wife, his children, his rural employments, the inconveniences he has remarked, and the remedies he thinks may be applied to remove them: during which long detail, he often lets fall ſome excellent moral, or uſeful leſſon in agriculture, the dictates of age and experience; or ſhould there be even nothing in what he ſays, ſo long as he takes a pleaſure in ſaying it, Julia would take pleaſure in hearing.

She retires after dinner into her own apartment,

ment, to fetch ſome little preſent to the wife or daughter of the good old man. This is preſented to him by the children, who in return receive ſome trifle of him, with which ſhe had ſecretly provided him for that purpoſe. Thus ſhe initiates them betimes, to that intimate and pleaſing benevolence, which knits the bond of ſociety between perſons of different conditions. The children are accordingly accuſtomed to reſpect old age, to eſteem ſimplicity of manners, and to diſtinguiſh merit in all ranks of people. The young peaſants, on the other hand, ſeeing their fathers thus entertained at a gentleman's houſe, and admitted to the maſter's table, take no offence at being themſelves excluded: they think ſuch excluſion not owing to their rank, but their age; they do not ſay, We are too poor, but, We are too young, to be thus treated. Thus the honour done to their aged parents, and their hope of one day enjoying the ſame diſtinction, make them amends for being debarred from it at preſent, and excite them to become worthy of it.

At his return home to his cottage, their delighted gueſt impatiently produces the preſents he has brought his wife and children, who are overjoyed at the honour done them; the good old man, at the ſame time, eagerly relating to them the reception he met with, the dainties he has eaten, the wines he has taſted, the obliging diſcourſe and converſation, the affability of the gentlefolks, and the aſſiduity of the ſervants; in the recital of all which, he enjoys it a ſecond time, and the whole family partake of the honour done to their head. They join in concert

to bleſs that illuſtrious houſe, which affords at once an example to the rich, and an aſylum for the poor, and whoſe generous inhabitants diſdain not the indigent, but do honour to grey hairs. Such is the incenſe that is pleaſing to benevolent minds; and, if there be any prayers to which heaven lends a gracious ear, they are certainly not thoſe which are offered up by meanneſs and flattery in the hearing of the perſon prayed for, but ſuch as the grateful and ſimple heart dictates in ſecret beneath its own roof.

Thus it is that agreeable and affectionate ſentiments give charms to a life, inſipid to indifferent minds: it is thus, that buſineſs, labour, and retirement, become amuſing by the art of managing them. A ſound mind knows how to take delight in vulgar employments, as a healthful body reliſhes the moſt ſimple aliments. All thoſe indolent people, who are diverted with ſo much difficulty, owe their diſguſt to their vices, and loſe their taſte for pleaſure only with that of their duty. As to Julia, it is directly contrary; the employment, which a certain languor of mind made her formerly neglect, becomes now intereſting from the motive that excites to it. One muſt be totally inſenſible, to be always without vivacity. She formerly ſought ſolitude and retirement, in order to indulge her reflections on the object of her paſſion; at preſent ſhe has acquired new activity, by having formed new and different connections. She is not one of thoſe indolent mothers of a family, who are contented to ſtudy their duty when they ſhould diſcharge it, and loſe their time in inqui-

quiring after the buſineſs of others, which they ſhould employ in diſpatching their own. Julia practiſes at preſent what ſhe learnt long ago. Her time for reading and ſtudy has given place to that of action. As ſhe riſes an hour later than her huſband, ſo ſhe goes an hour later to bed. This hour is the only time ſhe employs in ſtudy; for the day is not too long for the various buſineſs in which ſhe is engaged.

This, my Lord, is what I had to ſay to you concerning the œconomy of this houſe, and of the retired life of thoſe who govern it. Contented in their ſtation, they peaceably enjoy its conveniences; ſatisfied with their fortune, they ſeek not to augment it for their children; but to leave them with the inheritance they themſelves received, an eſtate in good condition, affectionate ſervants, a taſte for employment, order, moderation, and for every thing that can render delightful and agreeable to men of ſenſe the enjoyment of a moderate fortune, as prudently preſerved as honeſtly acquired.

LETTER CXXXVII.

To Lord B——.

WE have had viſitors for ſome days paſt. They left us yeſterday, and we renewed that agreeable ſociety ſubſiſting between us three, which is by ſo much the more delightful, as there is nothing, even in the bottom of our hearts, that we deſire to conceal from each other. What a pleaſure do I take, in aſſuming a

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new being which renders me worthy of your confidence. At every mark of eſteem which I receive from Julia and her huſband, I ſay to myſelf with an air of ſelf-ſufficiency, At length I may venture to appear before Lord B——. It is with your aſſiſtance, it is under your eyes, that I hope to do honour to my preſent ſituation by my paſt follies. If an extinguiſhed paſſion throws the mind into a ſtate of dejection, a paſſion ſubdued adds to the conſciouſneſs of victory, a new elevation of ſentiment, a more lively attachment to all that is ſublime and beautiful. Shall I loſe the fruit of a ſacrifice, which hath coſt me ſo dear? No, my Lord; I feel that, animated by your example, my heart is going to profit by all thoſe ardent ſentiments it has conquered. I feel that it was neceſſary for me to be what I was, in order for me to become what I am.

After having thrown away ſix days in frivolous converſation with perſons indifferent to us, we paſſed yeſterday morning, after the manner of the Engliſh, by ourſelves and in ſilence; taſting at once the pleaſure of being together, and the ſweetneſs of ſelf-recollection. How ſmall a part of mankind know any thing of the pleaſures of this ſituation! I never ſaw a perſon in France who had the leaſt idea of it. The converſation of friends, ſay they, can never be exhauſted. It is true, the tongue may eaſily find words for common attachments: but friendſhip, my Lord, friendſhip! thou animating celeſtial ſentiment! what language is worthy of thee? What tongue preſumes to be thy interpreter? Can any thing ſpoken to a friend equal what is felt in his company? Good God! how many things are conveyed

veyed by a ſqueeze of the hand, by an animating look, by an eager embrace, by a ſigh that riſes from the bottom of the heart! And how cold in compariſon is the firſt word which is ſpoken after that! I ſhall never forget the evenings I paſſed at Beſançon, thoſe delightful moments ſacred to ſilence and friendſhip. Never, oh B———! thou nobleſt of men! ſublimeſt of friends! no, never have I undervalued what you then did for me; never have my lips preſumed to mention it.

It is certain, that this ſtate of contemplation affords the greateſt delight to ſuſceptible minds. But I have always obſerved, that impertinent viſitors prevent one from enjoying it, and that friends ought to be by themſelves, to be at liberty to ſay nothing. At ſuch a time one ſhould be, if one may uſe the expreſſion, collected in each other; the leaſt avocation is deſtructive, the leaſt conſtraint is inſupportable. It is then ſo ſweet to pronounce the dictates of the heart without reſtraint. It ſeems as if one dared to think freely only of what one can as freely ſpeak; it ſeems as if the preſence of a ſtranger reſtrained the ſentiment, and compreſſed thoſe hearts which could ſo fully dictate themſelves alone.

Two hours paſſed away in this ſilent ecſtaſy, more delightful, a thouſand times, than the frigid repoſe of the deities of Epicurus. After breakfaſt, the children came, as uſual, into the apartment of their mother; who, inſtead of retiring and ſhutting herſelf up with them in the work-room, according to cuſtom, kept them with her, as if to make them ſome amends for the time they had loſt without ſeeing us; and

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we none of us parted till dinner. Harriot, who begins to know how to handle her needle, ſat at work before Fanny, who was weaving lace, and reſted her cuſhion on the back of her little chair. The two boys were buſy at a table turning over the leaves of a book of prints, the ſubject of which the eldeſt explained to the younger; Harriot, who knew the whole by heart, being attentive to, and correcting him when wrong; and ſometimes, pretending to be ignorant what figures they were at, ſhe made it a pretence to riſe, and go backwards and forwards from the chair to the table. During theſe little leſſons, which were given and taken with little pains and leſs reſtraint, the younger boy was playing with ſome counters which he had ſecreted under the book.

Mrs Wolmar was at work on ſome embroidery near the window oppoſite the children, and her huſband and I were ſtill ſitting at the tea-table, reading the Gazette, to which ſhe gave but little attention. But when we came to the article which mentions the illneſs of the king of France, and the ſingular attachment of his people, unequalled by any thing but that of the Romans for Germanicus, ſhe made ſome reflections on the diſpoſition of that affectionate and benevolent nation, whom all the world hate, whilſt they have no hatred to any one; adding, that ſhe envied only a ſovereign the power of making himſelf beloved. To this her huſband replied, You have no need to envy a ſovereign, who have ſo long had us all for your ſubjects. On which ſhe turned her head, and caſt a look on him ſo affecting and tender, that it ſtruck me pro-

prodigiouſly. She ſaid nothing indeed; for what could ſhe ſay equal to ſuch a look? Our eyes meet: and I could perceive, by the manner in which her huſband preſſed my hand, that the ſame emotion had affected us all three, and that the delightful influence of her expanſive heart diffuſed itſelf around, and triumphed over inſenſibility itſelf.

We were thus diſpoſed when that ſilent ſcene began, of which I juſt now ſpoke: you may judge, that it was not the conſequence of coldneſs or chagrin. It was firſt interrupted by the little management of the children; who, nevertheleſs, as ſoon as we left off ſpeaking, moderated their prattle, as if afraid of diſturbing the general ſilence. The little teacher was the firſt that lowered her voice, made ſigns to the others, and ran about on tip-toe, while their play became the more diverting by this light conſtraint. This ſcene, which ſeemed to preſent itſelf in order to prolong our tenderneſs, produced its natural effect.

Ammutiſcon le lingue, e parlan l'alme.

Our hearts converſing while our tongues were mute.

How many things may be ſaid without opening one's lips! How warm the ſentiments that may be communicated, without the cold interpoſition of ſpeech! Julia inſenſibly permitted her attention to be engaged by the ſame object. Her eyes were fixed on the three children; and her heart, raviſhed with the moſt enchanting ecſtaſy,

ecſtaſy, animated her charming features with all the affecting ſweetneſs of maternal tenderneſs.

Thus given up to this double contemplation, Wolmar and I were indulging our reveries, when the children put an end to them. The eldeſt, who was diverting himſelf with the prints, ſeeing the counters prevented his brother from being attentive, took an opportunity, when he had piled them up, to give them a knock and throw them down on the floor. Marcellin fell a crying; and Julia, without troubling herſelf to quiet him, bid Fanny pick up the counters. The child was immediately huſhed; the counters were nevertheleſs not brought him, nor did he begin to cry again as I expected. This circumſtance, which however was nothing in itſelf, recalled to my mind a great many others, to which I had given no attention; and when I think of them, I do not remember ever to have ſeen children, with ſo little ſpeaking to, give ſo little trouble. They hardly ever are out of the mother's ſight, and yet one can hardly perceive they are in company. They are lively and playful, as children of their age ſhould be, but never clamorous or teizing; they are already diſcreet, before they know what diſcretion is. But what I am moſt ſurpriſed at is, that all this appears to be brought about of itſelf; and that, with ſuch an affectionate tenderneſs for her children, Julia ſeems to give herſelf ſo little concern about them. In fact, one never ſees her very earneſt to make them ſpeak or hold their tongues, to make them do things or let them alone. She never diſputes with them; ſhe never contradicts them in their amuſements: ſo that

that one would be apt to think ſhe contented herſelf with ſeeing and loving them; and that when they have paſſed the day with her, ſhe had diſcharged towards them the whole duty of a mother.

Though this peaceable tranquillity appears more agreeable in contemplation than the reſtleſs ſolicitude of other mothers, yet I was not a little ſurpriſed at an apparent indolence ſo little conformable to her character. I would have had her even a little diſcontented, amidſt ſo many reaſons to the contrary: ſo well doth a ſuperfluous activity become maternal affection! I would willingly have attributed the goodneſs of the children to the care of the mother; and ſhould have been glad to have obſerved more faults in them, that I might have ſeen her more ſolicitous to correct them.

After buſying myſelf a long time with theſe reflections in ſilence, I at laſt determined to communicate them to her. I ſee, ſaid I, that heaven rewards virtuous mothers in the good diſpoſition of their children; but the beſt diſpoſition muſt be cultivated. Their education ought to begin from the time of their birth. Can there be a time more proper to form their minds, than when they have received no impreſſion that need to be effaced? If you give them up to themſelves in their infancy, at what age do you expect them to be docile? While you have nothing elſe to teach them, you ought to teach them obedience. Why, returned ſhe, do my children diſobey me? That were difficult, ſaid I, as you lay no commands upon them. On this ſhe looked at her huſband, and ſmiled; then, taking them by the hand, ſhe led me into the

cloſet, that we might converſe without being heard by the children.

Here, explaining her maxims at leiſure, ſhe diſcovered to me, under that air of negligence, the moſt vigilant attention of maternal tenderneſs. I was a long time, ſaid ſhe, of your opinion with regard to the premature inſtruction of children; and while I expected my firſt child, was anxious concerning the obligations I ſhould ſoon have to diſcharge. I uſed often to ſpeak to Mr Wolmar on that ſubject. What better guide could I take than ſo ſenſible an obſerver, in whom the intereſt of a father was united to the indifference of a philoſopher? He fulfilled, and indeed ſurpaſſed my expectations. He ſoon made me ſenſible, that the firſt and moſt important part of education, preciſely that which all the world neglects *, is that of preparing a child to receive inſtruction. The common error of parents, who pique themſelves on their own knowledge, is to ſuppoſe their children capable of reaſoning as ſoon as they are born, and to talk to them as if they were grown perſons before they can ſpeak. Reaſon is the inſtrument they uſe, whereas every other means ought firſt to be uſed, in order to form their reaſon; for it is certain, that of all the knowledge which men acquire, or are capable of acquiring, the art of reaſoning is the laſt and moſt difficult to learn. By talking to them, at ſo early an age, in a language they do not underſtand, they learn to be

* Locke himſelf, the ſagacious Locke, has forgot it, inſtructing us rather in the things we ought to require of our children, than in the means of obtaining them.

be ſatisfied with mere words; to talk to others in the ſame manner; to contradict every thing that is ſaid to them; to think themſelves as wiſe as their teachers: and all that one thinks to obtain by reaſonable motives, is in fact obtained only by thoſe of fear or vanity.

The moſt conſummate patience would be wearied out by endeavouring to educate a child in this manner; and thus it is, that, fatigued and diſguſted with the perpetual importunity of children, their parents, unable to ſupport the noiſe and diſorder they themſelves have given riſe to, are obliged to part with them, and to deliver them over to the care of a maſter; as if one could expect in a preceptor more patience and good-nature than in a father.

Nature, continued Julia, would have children be children before they are men. If we attempt to pervert that order, we produce only forward fruit, which has neither maturity nor flavour, and will ſoon decay; we raiſe young profeſſors and old children. Infancy has a manner of perceiving, thinking, and feeling, peculiar to itſelf. Nothing is more abſurd than to think of ſubmitting ours in its ſtead; and I would as ſoon expect a child of mine to be five feet high, as to have a mature judgment at the age of ten years.

The underſtanding does not begin to form itſelf till after ſome years, and when the corporeal organs have acquired a certain conſiſtence. The deſign of nature is therefore evidently to ſtrengthen the body, before the mind is exerciſed. Children are always in motion; reſt and reflection are inconſiſtent with their age; a ſtu-

dious and ſedentary life would prevent their growth and injure their health; neither their body nor mind can ſupport reſtraint. Perpetually ſhut up in a room with their books, they loſe their vigour, become delicate, feeble, ſickly, rather ſtupid than reaſonable; and their minds ſuffer, during their whole lives, for the weakneſs of their bodies.

But even though ſuch premature inſtruction were as profitable as it is really hurtful to their underſtandings, a very great inconvenience would attend the application of it indiſcriminately to all, without regard to the particular genius of each. For, beſides the conſtitution common to its ſpecies, every child at its birth poſſeſſes a peculiar temperament, which determines its genius and character; and which it is improper either to pervert or reſtrain; the buſineſs of education being only to model and bring it to perfection. All theſe characters are, according to Mr Wolmar, good in themſelves: for nature, ſays he, makes no miſtakes. All the vices imputed to malignity of diſpoſition, are only the effect of the bad form it hath received. According to him, there is not a villain upon earth, whoſe natural propenſity, well directed, might not have been productive of great virtues; nor is there a wrong-head in being, that might not have been of uſe to himſelf and ſociety, had his natural talents taken a certain bias; juſt as deformed and monſtrous images are rendered beautiful and proportionable, by placing them in a proper point of view. Every thing, ſays he, tends to the common good in the univerſal ſyſtem of nature. Every man has his place aſ-

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ſigned in the beſt order and arrangement of things; the buſineſs is to find out that place, and not to diſturb ſuch order. What muſt be the conſequence then of an education begun in the cradle, and carried on always in the ſame manner, without regard to the vaſt diverſity of temperaments and genius in mankind? Uſeleſs or hurtful inſtructions would be given to the greater part, while at the ſame time they are deprived of ſuch as would be moſt uſeful and convenient; nature would be confined on every ſide, and the greateſt qualities of the mind defaced, in order to ſubſtitute in their place mean and little ones, of no utility. By uſing indiſcriminately the ſame means with different talents, the one ſerves to deface the other, and all are confounded together. Thus, after a great deal of pains thrown away in ſpoiling the natural endowments of children, we preſently ſee thoſe tranſitory and frivolous ones of education decay and vaniſh, while thoſe of nature, being totally obſcured, appear no more: and thus we loſe at once both what we have pulled down, and what we have raiſed up. In a word, in return for ſo much pains indiſcreetly taken, all theſe little prodigies become wits without ſenſe, and men without merit, remarkable only for their weakneſs and inſignificancy.

I underſtand your maxims, ſaid I to Julia; but I know not how to reconcile them with your own opinion on the little advantage ariſing from the diſplay of the genius and natural talents of individuals, either reſpecting their own happineſs or the real intereſts of ſociety. Would it not be infinitely better to form a perfect mo-

del, by animating one, reſtraining another, by regulating its paſſions, improving its underſtanding, and thus correcting nature?——Correcting nature! ſays Mr Wolmar, interrupting me, that is a very fine expreſſion; but before you make uſe of it, pray reply to what Julia has already advanced.

The moſt ſignificant reply, as I thought, was to deny the principle on which her arguments were founded; which I accordingly did. You ſuppoſe, ſaid I, that the diverſity of temperament and genius, which diſtinguiſh individuals, is the immediate work of nature; whereas nothing is leſs evident. For, if our minds are naturally different, they muſt be unequal; and if nature has made them unequal, it muſt be by enduing ſome, in preference to others, with a more refined perception, a greater memory, or a greater capacity of attention. Now, as to perception and memory, it is proved by experience, that their different degrees of extent or perfection are not the ſtandard of genius and abilities; and as to a capacity of attention, it depends ſolely on the force of the paſſions by which we are animated; and it is alſo proved that all mankind are by nature ſuſceptible of paſſions, ſtrong enough to excite in them that degree of attention neceſſary to a ſuperiority of genius.

If therefore a diverſity of genius, inſtead of being derived from nature, be the effect of education; that is to ſay, of the different ideas and ſentiments which objects excite in us during our infancy, of the various circumſtances in which we are engaged, and of all the impreſſions we receive; ſo far ſhould we be from waiting to know

know the character of a child before we give it education, that we ſhould, on the contrary, be in haſte to form its character by giving it a proper education.

To this he replied, that it was not his way to deny the exiſtence of any thing, becauſe he could not explain it. Look, ſays he, upon thoſe two dogs in the court-yard. They are of the ſame litter; they have been fed and trained together; have never been parted; and yet one of them is a briſk, lively, good-natured, docible cur; while the other is lumpiſh, heavy, croſs-grained, and incapable of learning any thing. Now their difference of temperament, only, can have produced in them that of character, as the difference of our interior organiſation produces in us that of our minds: in every other circumſtance they have been alike—Alike! interrupted I; what a vaſt difference may there not have been, though unobſerved by you? How many minute objects may not have acted on the one, and not on the other! How many little circumſtances may not have differently affected them, which you have not perceived! Very pretty, indeed, ſays he; ſo, I find you reaſon like the aſtrologers; who, when two men are mentioned of different fortune, yet born under the ſame aſpect, deny the identity of circumſtances. On the contrary, they maintain, that, on account of the rapidity of the heavenly motions, there muſt have been an immenſe diſtance between the themes, in the horoſcope, of the one and the other; and that, if the preciſe moment of their births had been carefully noted, the objection had been turned into a proof.

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Let us, however, leave theſe ſubtilties, and confine ourſelves to obſervation. This may teach us, indeed, that there are characters which are known almoſt at the birth, and children that may be ſtudied at the breaſt of their nurſe: but theſe are of a particular claſs, and receive their education in beginning to live. As for others, who are later known, to attempt to form their genius before their characters are diſtinguiſhed, is to run a riſque of ſpoiling what is good in their natural diſpoſitions, and ſubſtituting what is worſe in its place. Did not your maſter Plato maintain, that all the art of man, that all philoſophy could not extract from the human mind what nature had not implanted there; as all the operations in chemiſtry are incapable of extracting from any mixture more gold than is already contained in it? This is not true of our ſentiments or our ideas; but it is true of our diſpoſition or capacity of acquiring them. To change the genius, one muſt be able to change the interior organiſation of the body; to change a character, one muſt be capable of changing the temperament on which it depends. Have you ever heard of a paſſionate man's becoming patient and temperate, or of a frigid methodical genius having acquired a ſpirited imagination? For my own part, I think it would be juſt as eaſy to make a fair man brown, or a blockhead a man of ſenſe. It is in vain then to attempt to model different minds by one common ſtandard. One may reſtrain, but we can never change them: one may hinder men from appearing what they are, but can never make them really otherwiſe; and, though they diſguiſe

diſguiſe their ſentiments in the ordinary commerce of life, you will ſee them re-aſſume their real characters on every important occaſion. Beſides, our buſineſs is not to change the character, and alter the natural diſpoſition of the mind, but, on the contrary, to improve and prevent its degenerating; for by theſe means it is, that a man becomes what he is capable of being, and that the work of nature is compleated by education. Now, before any character can be cultivated, it is neceſſary that it ſhould be ſtudied; that we ſhould patiently wait its opening; that we ſhould furniſh occaſions for it to diſplay itſelf; and that we ſhould forbear doing any thing, rather than do wrong. To one genius it is neceſſary to give wings, and to another ſhackles; one ſhould be ſpurred forward, another reined in; one ſhould be encouraged, another intimidated; ſometimes both ſhould be checked, and at others aſſiſted. One man is formed to extend human knowledge to the higheſt degree; to another it is even dangerous to learn to read. Let us wait for the opening of reaſon; it is that which diſplays the character, and gives it its true form: it is by that alſo it is cultivated, and there is no ſuch thing as education before the underſtanding is ripe for inſtruction.

As to the maxims of Julia, which you think oppoſite to this doctrine, I ſee nothing in them contradictory to it: on the contrary, I find them, for my own part, perfectly compatible. Every man at his birth, brings into the world with him a genius, talents, and character, peculiar to himſelf. Thoſe, who are deſtined to live a life

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of ſimplicity in the country, have no need to diſplay their talents in order to be happy: their unexerted faculties are like the gold mines of the Valais, which the public good will not permit to be opened. But in a more poliſhed ſociety, where the head is of more uſe than the hands, it is neceſſary that all the talents nature hath beſtowed on men ſhould be exerted; that they ſhould be directed to that quarter, in which they can proceed the fartheſt; and above all, that their natural propenſity ſhould be encouraged by every thing which can make it uſeful. In the firſt caſe, the good of the ſpecies only is conſulted; every one acts in the ſame manner; example is their only rule of action; habit their only talent; and no one exerts any other genius than that which is common to all: whereas in the ſecond caſe we conſult the intereſt and capacity of individuals; if one man poſſeſs any talent ſuperior to another, it is cultivated and purſued as far as it will reach; and if a man be poſſeſſed of adequate abilities, he may become the greateſt of his ſpecies. Theſe maxims are ſo little contradictory, that they have been put in practice in all ages. Inſtruct not therefore the children of the peaſant, nor of the citizen, for you know not as yet what inſtruction is proper for them. In every caſe let the body be formed, till the judgment begins to appear: then is the time for cultivation.

All this would ſeem very well, ſaid I, if I did not ſee one inconvenience, very prejudicial to the advantages you promiſe yourſelf from this method; and this is, that children, thus left to themſelves, will get many bad habits, which can

can be prevented only by teaching them good ones. You may ſee ſuch children readily contract all the bad practices they perceive in others, becauſe ſuch examples are eaſily followed; and never imitate the good ones, which would coſt them more trouble. Accuſtomed to have every thing, and to do as they pleaſe on every occaſion, they become mutinous, obſtinate, and untractable.—But, interrupted Mr Wolmar, it appears to me that you have remarked the contrary in ours, and that this remark has given riſe to this converſation. I muſt confeſs, anſwered I, this is the very thing which ſurpriſes me. What can Julia have done to make them ſo tractable? What method hath ſhe taken to bring it about? What has ſhe ſubſtituted inſtead of the yoke of diſcipline? A yoke much more inflexible, returned he immediately, that of neceſſity; but, in giving you an account of her conduct, you will be better able to comprehend her views. He then engaged Julia to explain her method of education; which, after a ſhort pauſe, ſhe did in the following manner.

"Happy, my dear friend, are thoſe who are well-born! I lay not ſo great a ſtreſs as Mr Wolmar does on my own endeavours. Notwithſtanding his maxims, I doubt much if a good man can ever be made out of a child of a bad diſpoſition and character. Convinced, nevertheleſs, of the excellence of his method, I endeavoured to regulate my conduct, in the government of my family, in every reſpect agreeable to him. My firſt hope is, that I ſhall never have a child of a vicious diſpoſition; my ſecond, that I ſhall be able to educate thoſe which God

God has given me, under the direction of their father, in ſuch a manner, that they may one day have the happineſs of poſſeſſing his virtues. To this end I have endeavoured to adopt his rules by giving them a principle leſs philoſophical, and more agreeable to maternal affection; namely, to make my children happy. This was the firſt prayer of my heart after I was a mother, and all the buſineſs of my life is to accompliſh it. From the firſt time I held my eldeſt ſon in my arms, I have reflected that the ſtate of infancy is almoſt a fourth part of the longeſt life; that men ſeldom paſs through the other three-fourths; and that it is a piece of cruel prudence to make that firſt part uneaſy, in order to ſecure the happineſs of the reſt, which may never come. I reflected, that during the weakneſs of infancy, nature had oppreſſed children in ſo many different ways, that it would be barbarous to add to that oppreſſion the empire of our caprices, by depriving them of a liberty ſo very much confined, and which they were ſo little capable of abuſing. I reſolved, therefore, to lay mine under as little conſtraint as poſſible; to leave them to the free exertion of all their little powers; and to ſuppreſs in them none of the emotions of nature. By theſe means I have already gained two great advantages; the one, that of preventing their opening minds from knowing any thing of falſehood, vanity, anger, envy, and, in a word, of all thoſe vices which are the conſequences of ſubjection, and which one is obliged to have recourſe to, when we would have children do what nature does not teach: the other is, that they are more at liber-

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ty to grow and gather ſtrength, by the continual exerciſe which inſtinct directs them to. Accuſtomed, like the children of peaſants, to expoſe themſelves to the heat and cold, they grow as hardy; are equally capable of bearing the inclemencies of the weather; and become more robuſt, as living more at their eaſe. This is the way to provide againſt the age of maturity, and the accidents of humanity. I have already told you, that I diſlike that deſtructive puſillanimity, which, by dint of ſolicitude and care, enervates a child, torments it by conſtant reſtraint, confines it by a thouſand vain precautions, and, in ſhort, expoſes it during its whole life to thoſe inevitable dangers it is thus protected from but for a moment; and thus, in order to avoid catching a few colds while children, men lay up for themſelves conſumptions, pleuriſies, and a world of other diſeaſes.

What makes children, left thus to themſelves, acquire the ill habits you ſpeak of, is that, not contented with their own liberty, they endeavour to command others; which is owing to the abſurd indulgence of too many fond mothers, who are to be pleaſed only by indulging all the fantaſtical deſires of their children. I flatter myſelf, my friend, that you have ſeen in mine nothing like the deſire of command and authority, even over the loweſt domeſtic; and that you have ſeen me countenance as little the falſe complaiſance and ceremony uſed to them. It is in this point, that I think I have taken a new and more certain method to make my children at once free, eaſy, obliging, and tractable; and that on a principle the moſt ſimple in the world,

which is, by convincing them they are but children.

To conſider the ſtate of infancy in itſelf, is there a being in the univerſe more helpleſs or miſerable, that lies more at the mercy of every thing about it, that has more need of pity and protection, than an infant? Does it not ſeem, that, on this account, the firſt noiſe which nature directs it to make, is that of crying and complaint? Does it not ſeem, that nature gives it an affecting and tender appearance, in order to engage every one, who approaches it, to aſſiſt its weakneſs, and relieve its wants? What, therefore, can be more offenſive, or contrary to order, than to ſee a child pert and imperious, commanding every one about him, and aſſuming impudently the tone of a maſter over thoſe who, ſhould they abandon him, would leave him to periſh? Or can any thing be more abſurd than to ſee parents approve ſuch behaviour, and encourage their children to tyranniſe over their nurſes, till they are big enough to tyranniſe over the parents themſelves?

For my own part, I have ſpared no pains to prevent my ſon's acquiring the dangerous idea of command and ſervitude, and have never given him room to think himſelf attended more out of duty than pity. This point is, perhaps, the moſt difficult and important in education; nor can I well explain it, without entering into all thoſe precautions which I have been obliged to take, to ſuppreſs in him that inſtinctive knowledge, which is ſo ready to diſtinguiſh the mercenary ſervice of domeſtics from the tenderneſs of maternal ſolicitude.

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One of my principal methods has been, as I have juſt obſerved, to convince him of the impoſſibility of his ſubſiſting, at his age, without our aſſiſtance. After which I had no great difficulty to ſhew him, that, in receiving aſſiſtance from others, we lay ourſelves under obligations to them, and are in a ſtate of dependance; and that the ſervant have a real ſuperiority over him, becauſe he cannot do without them, while he, on the contrary, can do them no ſervice; ſo that inſtead of being vain of their attendance, he looks upon it with a ſort of humiliation, as a mark of his weakneſs, and ardently wiſhes for the time when he ſhall be big and ſtrong enough to have the honour of ſerving himſelf."

Theſe notions, I ſaid, would be difficult to eſtabliſh in families where the father and mother themſelves are waited on like children; but in this, where every perſon has ſome employment alloted him, even from the maſter and miſtreſs to the loweſt domeſtic; where the intercourſe between them apparently conſiſts only of reciprocal ſervices, I do not think it impoſſible. Nevertheleſs, I am at a loſs to conceive how children, accuſtomed to have their real wants ſo readily ſatisfied, can be prevented from expecting the ſame gratification of their imaginary wants or humours; or how it is that they do not ſometimes ſuffer from the humour of a ſervant, who may treat their real wants as imaginary ones.

"Oh, my friend, replied Mrs Wolmar, an ignorant woman may frighten herſelf at any thing, or nothing. But the real wants of chil-

dren, as well as grown perſons, are very few; we ought rather to regard the duration of our eaſe than the gratifications of a ſingle moment. Do you think, that a child, who lies under no reſtraint, can ſuffer ſo much from the humour of a governeſs, under the eye of its mother, as to hurt it? You imagine inconveniences, which ariſe from vices already contracted, without reflecting that my care has been to prevent ſuch vices from being contracted at all. Women naturally love children; and no miſunderſtanding would ariſe between them, except from the deſire of one to ſubject the other to their caprices. Now that cannot happen here, neither on the part of the child, of whom nothing is required, nor on that of the governeſs, whom the child has no notion of commanding. I have in this acted directly contrary to other mothers, who in appearance would have their children obey the domeſtics, and in reality require the ſervants to obey the children: here neither of them command nor obey; but the child never meets with more complaiſance, from any perſon, than he ſhews for them. Hence, perceiving that he has no authority over the people about him, he becomes tractable and obliging; in ſeeking to gain the eſteem of others, he contracts an affection for them in turn: this is the infallible effect of ſelf-love; and from this reciprocal affection ariſing from the notion of equality, naturally reſult thoſe virtues, which are conſtantly preached to children, without any effect.

I have thought, that the moſt eſſential part in the education of children, and which is ſeldom regarded in the beſt families, is to make them ſen-

ſenſible of their inability, weakneſs and dependence, and, as my huſband called it, the heavy yoke of that neceſſity which nature has impoſed on our ſpecies; and that, not only in order to ſhew them how much is done to alleviate the burden of that yoke, but eſpecially to inſtruct them betimes in what rank providence has placed them, that they may not preſume too far above themſelves, or be ignorant of the reciprocal duties of humanity.

Young people, who from their cradle have been brought up in eaſe and effeminacy, who have been careſſed by every one, indulged in all their caprices, and have been uſed to obtain eaſily every thing they deſired, enter upon the world with many impertinent prejudices; of which they are generally cured by frequent mortifications, affronts, and chagrin. Now I would willingly ſpare my children this ſecond kind of education, by giving them at firſt a juſt notion of things. I had indeed once reſolved to indulge my eldeſt ſon in every thing he wanted, from a perſuaſion that the firſt impulſes of nature muſt be good and ſalutary: but I was not long in diſcovering, that children, conceiving from ſuch treatment that they have a right to be obeyed, depart from a ſtate of nature almoſt as ſoon as born; contracting our vices from our example, and theirs by our indiſcretion. I ſaw, that if I indulged him in all his humours, they would only increaſe by ſuch indulgence; that it was neceſſary to ſtop at ſome point, and that contradiction would be but the more mortifying, as he ſhould be leſs accuſtomed to it: but that it might be leſs painful to him, I began to uſe

him to it by degrees; and in order to prevent his tears and lamentations, I made every denial irrecoverable. It is true, I contradict him as little as poſſible, and never without due conſideration. Whatever is given or permitted him, is done unconditionally, and at the firſt inſtance; and in this we are indulgent enough: but he never gets any thing by importunity, neither his tears nor intreaties being of any effect. Of this he is now ſo well convinced, that he makes no uſe of them; he goes his way on the firſt word, and frets himſelf no more at ſeeing a box of ſweetmeats taken away from him, than at ſeeing a bird fly away, which he would be glad to catch, there appearing to him the ſame impoſſibility of having the one as the other; and ſo far from beating the chairs and tables, that he dares not lift his hand againſt thoſe who oppoſe him. In every thing that diſpleaſes him, he feels the weight of neceſſity, the effect of his own weakneſs, but never——excuſe me a moment, ſays ſhe, ſeeing I was going to reply; I foreſee your objection, and will come to it preſently.

The great cauſe of the ill humour of children, is the care which is taken either to quiet or to aggravate them. They will ſometimes cry for an hour, for no other reaſon in the world than becauſe they perceive we would not have them. So long as we take notice of their crying, ſo long have they a reaſon for continuing to cry; but they will ſoon give over of themſelves, when they ſee no notice is taken of them: for, old or young, nobody loves to throw away his trouble. This is exactly the caſe with my eldeſt boy, who was once the moſt peeviſh little bawler, ſtunning

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the whole houſe with his cries; whereas now you can hardly hear there is a child in the houſe. He cries, indeed, when he is in pain; but then it is the voice of nature, which ſhould never be reſtrained; and he is again huſhed as ſoon as ever the pain is over. For this reaſon I pay great attention to his tears, as I am certain he never ſheds them for nothing: and hence I have gained the advantage of being certain when he is in pain, and when not; when he is well, and when ſick; an advantage which is loſt with thoſe who cry out of mere humour, and only in order to be appeaſed. I muſt confeſs, however, that this management is not to be expected from nurſes and governeſſes: for, as nothing is more tireſome than to hear a child cry, and as theſe good women think of nothing but the time preſent, they do not forſee, that by quieting it to-day, it will cry the more to-morrow. But what is ſtill worſe, this indulgence produces an obſtinacy which is of more conſequence as the child grows up. The very cauſe that makes it a ſquawler at three years of age, will make it ſtubborn and refractory at twelve, quarrelſome at twenty, imperious at thirty, and inſupportable all its life.

I come now to your objection, added ſhe, ſmileing. In every indulgence granted to children, they can eaſily ſee our deſire to pleaſe them; and therefore they ſhould be taught to ſuppoſe we have reaſon for refuſing or complying with their requeſts. This is another advantage gained by making uſe of authority, rather than perſuaſion, on every neceſſary occaſion. For, as it is impoſſible they can always be blind to our motives, it

it is natural for them to imagine that we have ſome reaſon for contradicting them of which they are ignorant. On the contrary, when we have once ſubmitted to their judgment, they will pretend to judge of every thing; and thus become cunning, deceitful, fruitful in ſhifts and chicanery, endeavouring to ſilence thoſe who are weak enough to argue with them: for, when one is obliged to give them an account of things above their comprehenſion, they attribute the moſt prudent conduct to caprice, becauſe they are incapable of underſtanding it. In a word, the only way to render children docile and capable of reaſoning, is not to reaſon with them at all; but to convince them, that it is above their childiſh capacities; for they will always ſuppoſe the argument in their favour, unleſs you can give them good cauſe to think otherwiſe. They know very well that we are unwilling to diſpleaſe them, when they are certain of our affection; and children are ſeldom miſtaken in this particular: therefore, if I deny any thing to my children, I never reaſon with them; I never tell them why I do ſo or ſo; but I endeavour, as much as poſſible, that they ſhould find it out; and that even after the affair is over. By theſe means they are accuſtomed to think that I never deny them any thing without a ſufficient reaſon, though they cannot always perceive it.

On the ſame principle it is, that I never ſuffer my children to join in the converſation of grown perſons, or fooliſhly imagine themſelves upon an equality with them becauſe they are permitted to prattle. I would have them give a ſhort

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and modeſt anſwer, when they are ſpoken to; but never to ſpeak of their own head, or aſk impertinent queſtions of perſons ſo much older than themſelves, to whom they ought to ſhew more reſpect.

Theſe, interrupted I, are very rigid rules, for ſo indulgent a mother as Julia. Pythagoras himſelf was not more ſevere with his diſciples. You are not only afraid to treat them like men, but ſeem to be fearful leſt they ſhould too ſoon ceaſe to be children. By what means can they acquire knowledge more certain and agreeably, than by aſking queſtions of thoſe who know better than themſelves? What would the Pariſian ladies think of your maxims, whoſe children are never thought to prattle too much or too long; they judge of their future underſtanding, by the nonſenſe and impertinence they utter when young? That may not be amiſs, Mr Wolmar will tell me, in a country where the merit of the people lies in chattering, and where a man has no buſineſs to think if he can but talk. But I cannot underſtand how Julia, who is ſo deſirous of making the lives of her children happy, can reconcile that happineſs with ſo much reſtraint; nor amidſt ſo much confinement, what becomes of the liberty with which ſhe pretends to indulge them.

"What! (ſays ſhe, with impatience,) do we reſtrain their liberty, by preventing them from treſpaſſing on ours? And cannot they be happy, truly, without a whole company's ſitting ſilent to admire their puerilities? To prevent the growth of their vanity is a ſurer means to effect their happineſs: for the vanity of mankind is

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the ſource of their greateſt misfortunes, and there is no perſon ſo great or ſo admired, whoſe vanity has not given him much more pain than pleaſure *.

What can a child think of himſelf, when he ſees a circle of ſenſible people liſtening to, admiring, and waiting impatiently for, his wit, and breaking out in raptures at every impertinent expreſſion? Such falſe applauſe is enough to turn the head of a grown perſon; judge then what effect it muſt have upon that of a child. It is with the prattle of children, as with the predictions in the Almanac. It would be ſtrange, if amidſt ſuch a number of idle words, chance did not now and then jumble ſome of them into ſenſe. Imagine the effect which ſuch flattering exclamations muſt have on a ſimple mother, already too much flattered by her own heart. Think not, however, that I am proof againſt this error, becauſe I expoſe it. No, I ſee the fault, and yet am guilty of it. But, if I ſometimes admire the repartees of my ſon, I do it at leaſt in ſecret. He will not learn to become a vain prater, by hearing me applaud him; nor will flatterers have the pleaſure, in making me repeat them, of laughing at my weakneſs.

I remember one day, having company, I went out to give ſome neceſſary orders, and on my return found four or five great blockheads buſy at play with my boy; they came immediately to tell me, with great rapture, the many pretty things

* If there ever was a man upon earth made happy by his vanity, it is paſt a doubt that he was a fool.

things he had been ſaying to them, and with which they ſeemed quite charmed. Gentlemen, ſaid I, coldly, I doubt not but you know how to make puppets ſay very fine things, but I hope my children will one day be mine, when they will be able to act and talk of themſelves; I ſhall then be always glad to hear what they have ſaid and done well. Seeing this manner of paying their court did not take, they ſince play with my children, but not as with Punchinello; and to ſay the truth, they are evidently better, ſince they have been leſs admired.

With regard to their aſking queſtions, I do not forbid it indiſcriminately. I am the firſt to deſire them to aſk ſoftly, of their father or me, what they want to know. But I do not permit them to break in upon a ſerious converſation, to trouble every body with the firſt piece of impertinence that comes into their heads. The art of aſking queſtions is not quite ſo eaſy as may be imagined. It is rather that of a maſter than of a ſcholar. The wiſe know and inquire, ſays the Indian proverb, but the ignorant know not even what to inquire after. For want of ſuch previous inſtruction, children, when at liberty to aſk queſtions as they pleaſe, never aſk any but ſuch as are frivolous and anſwer no purpoſe, or ſuch difficult ones whoſe ſolution is beyond their comprehenſion. Thus, generally ſpeaking, they learn more by the queſtions which are aſked of them, than from thoſe which they aſk of others.

But if this method of permitting them to aſk queſtions, were as uſeful as it is pretended to be, is not the firſt and moſt important ſcience

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to them, that of being modeſt and diſcreet? and is there any other that ſhould be preferred to this? Of what uſe then is an unlimited freedom of ſpeech to children, before the age at which it is proper for them to ſpeak; or the right of impertinently obliging perſons to anſwer their childiſh queſtions? Theſe little chattering queriſts aſk queſtions, not ſo much for the ſake of inſtruction, as to engage one's notice. This indulgence, therefore, is not ſo much the way to inſtruct them, as to render them conceited and vain; an inconvenience much greater, in my opinion, than the advantage they gain by it: for ignorance will by degrees diminiſh, but vanity will always increaſe.

The worſt conſequence that can ariſe from too long a reſerve, will be, that my ſon when he comes to years of diſcretion, will be leſs fluent in ſpeech, and may want that volubility of tongue, and multiplicity of words, which he might otherwiſe have acquired: but when we conſider how much the cuſtom of paſſing away life in idle prattle impoveriſhes the underſtanding, this happy ſterility of words appears rather an advantage than otherwiſe. Shall the organ of truth, the moſt worthy organ of man, the only one whoſe uſe diſtinguiſhes him from the brutes, ſhall this be proſtituted to no better purpoſes than thoſe, which are anſwered as well by the inarticulate ſounds of other animals? He degrades himſelf even below them, when he ſpeaks and ſays nothing; a man ſhould preſerve his dignity, as ſuch, even in his lighteſt amuſements. If it be thought polite to ſtun the company with idle prate, I think it a much greater inſtance of true

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politeneſs to let others ſpeak before us; to pay a greater deference to what is ſaid, than to what we ſay ourſelves; and to let them ſee we reſpect them too much, to think they can be entertained by our nonſenſe. The good opinion of the world, that which makes us courted and careſſed by others, is not obtained ſo much by diſplaying our own talents, as by giving others an opportunity of diſplaying theirs, and by placing our own modeſty as a foil to their vanity. You need not be afraid that a man of ſenſe, who is ſilent only from reſerve and diſcretion, ſhould ever be taken for a fool. It is impoſſible in any country whatever, that a man ſhould be characteriſed by what he has not ſaid, or that he ſhould be deſpiſed for being ſilent. On the contrary, it may be generally obſerved, that people of few words impoſe ſilence on others, who pay an extraordinary attention to what they ſay, which gives them every advantage of converſation. It is ſo difficult for the moſt ſenſible man to retain his preſence of mind during the hurry of a long diſcourſe, ſo ſeldom that ſomething does not eſcape him which he afterwards repents of, that it is no wonder if he ſometimes chuſes to ſuppreſs what is pertinent, to avoid the riſque of talking nonſenſe.

But there is a wide difference between ſix years of age and twenty: my ſon will not be always a child, and in proportion as his underſtanding ripens, his father deſigns it ſhall be exerciſed. As to my part, my taſk does not extend ſo far. I may nurſe children, but I have not the preſumption to think of making them men. I hope, ſays ſhe, looking at her huſband,

this will be the employment of more able heads. I am a woman and a mother, and know my place and my duty; hence, I ſay again, it is not my duty to educate my ſons, but to prepare them for being educated.

In this I do no more than purſue the ſyſtem of Mr Wolmar, in every particular; which, the farther I proceed, the more reaſon I find to pronounce excellent and juſt. Obſerve my children, particularly the eldeſt; have you ever ſeen children more happy, more chearful, or leſs troubleſome? You ſee them jump and laugh and run about all day, without incommoding any one. What pleaſure, what independence, is their age capable of, which they do not enjoy, or which they abuſe? They are under as little reſtraint in my preſence, as when I am abſent. On the contrary, they ſeem always at more liberty under the eye of their mother, than elſewhere; and, though I am the author of all the ſeverity they undergo, they find me always more indulgent than any body elſe: for I cannot ſupport the thought of their not loving me better than any other perſon in the world.

The only rules impoſed on them in our company, are thoſe of liberty itſelf, viz. they muſt lay the company under no greater reſtraint than they themſelves are under; they muſt not cry louder than we talk; and as they are not obliged to concern themſelves with us, they are not to expect we ſhould concern ourſelves with them. Now, if ever they treſpaſs againſt ſuch equitable rules as theſe, all their puniſhment is, to be immediately ſent away; and I make this a puniſhment, by contriving to render every other place

place diſagreeable to them. Setting this reſtriction aſide, they are, in a manner, quite unreſtrained; we never oblige them to learn any thing; never tire them with fruitleſs corrections; never reprimand them with trifles; the only leſſons which are given them being thoſe of practice. Every perſon in the houſe, having my directions, is ſo diſcreet and careful in this buſineſs, that they leave me nothing to wiſh for: and, if any defect ſhould ariſe, my own aſſiduity would eaſily repair it.

Yeſterday, for example, the eldeſt boy, having taken a drum from his brother, ſet him a-crying. Fanny ſaid nothing to him, at the time; but about an hour after, when ſhe ſaw him in the height of his amuſement, ſhe in her turn took it from him, which ſet him a-crying alſo. Upon this ſhe ſaid to him, "You took it juſt now, by force, from your brother, and now I take it from you; what have you to complain of? am not I ſtronger than you?" She then began to beat the drum, as if ſhe took pleaſure in it. So far all went well, till ſome time after, ſhe was going to give the drum to the younger, but I prevented her, as this was not acting naturally, and might create envy between the brothers. In loſing the drum, the youngeſt ſubmitted to the hard law of neceſſity; the elder, in having it taken from him, was ſenſible of his injuſtice: both knew their own weakneſs, and were in a moment reconciled."

A plan ſo new, and ſo contrary to received opinions, at firſt ſurpriſed me. By dint of explanation, however, they at length repreſented it in ſo admirable a light, that I was made ſen-

ſible, that the path of nature is the beſt. The only inconvenience I find in this method, and which appeared to me very great, was to neglect the only faculty which children poſſeſs in perfection, and which is only debilitated by their growing into years. Methinks, according to their own ſyſtem of education, that the weaker the underſtanding, the more one ought to exerciſe and ſtrengthen the memory, which is then ſo proper to be exerciſed. It is that, ſaid I, which ought to ſupply the place of reaſon. The mind becomes heavy and dull by inaction. The ſeed takes no root in a ſoil badly pepared; and it is a ſtrange manner of preparing children to become reaſonable, by beginning to make them ſtupid. How! ſtupid! cried Mrs Wolmar immediately. Do you confound two qualities ſo different, and almoſt contrary, as memory and judgment *? As if an ill-digeſted and unconnected lumber of things, in a weak head, did not do more harm than good to the underſtanding. I confeſs, that, of all the faculties of the human mind, the memory is the firſt which opens itſelf, and is the moſt convenient to be cultivated in children: but which, in your opinion, ſhould be preferred, that which is moſt eaſy for them to learn, or that which is moſt important for them to know?

Conſider the uſe which is generally made of this aptitude, the eternal conſtraint to which they are ſubject in order to diſplay their memory;

* Here appears to be ſome little miſtake. Nothing is ſo uſeful to the judgment as memory: it is true, however, that it is not the remembrance of words.

ry; and then compare its utility to what they are made to ſuffer. Why ſhould a child be compelled to ſtudy languages he will never talk, and that even before he has learnt his own tongue? Why ſhould he be forced inceſſantly to make and repeat verſes he does not underſtand, and whoſe harmony all lies at the end of his fingers; or, be perplexed to death with circles and triangles, of which he has no idea; or why burdened with an infinity of names of towns, and rivers, which he conſtantly miſtakes, and learns a-new every day? Is this to cultivate the memory to the improvement of the underſtanding, or is all ſuch frivolous acquiſition worth one of thoſe many tears it coſts him.

If all this, however, were merely uſeleſs, I ſhould not ſo much complain of it; but is it not pernicious to accuſtom a child to be ſatisfied with mere words? Muſt not ſuch a heap of crude and indigeſted terms and notions be injurious to the formation of thoſe primary ideas with which the human underſtanding ought firſt to be furniſhed? And would it not be better to have no memory at all, than to have it ſtuffed with ſuch a heap of literary lumber, to the excluſion of neceſſary knowledge?

If nature has given to the brain of children that ſoftneſs of texture, which renders it proper to receive every impreſſion, it is not proper for us to imprint the names of ſovereigns, dates, terms of art, and other words of no meaning to them while young, nor of any uſe to them as they grow old: but it is our duty to trace out betimes all thoſe ideas which are relative to the ſtate and condition of humanity, thoſe which

relate to their duty and happineſs, that they may ſerve to conduct them through life in a manner agreeable to their being and faculties.

The memory of a child may be exerciſed without poring over books. Every thing he ſees, every thing he hears, catches his attention, and is ſtored up in his memory: he keeps a journal of the actions and converſation of men, and from every ſcene that preſents itſelf, deduces ſomething to enrich his memory. It is in the choice of objects, in the care to ſhew him ſuch only as he ought to know, and to hide from him thoſe of which he ought to be ignorant, that the true art of cultivating the memory conſiſts.

Think not, however, continued Julia, that we entirely neglect that care on which you think ſo much depends. A mother, if ſhe is the leaſt vigilant, holds in her hands the reins over the paſſions of her children. There are ways and means to excite in them a deſire of inſtruction; and ſo far as they are compatible with the freedom of the child, and tend not to ſow in them the ſeeds of vice, I readily employ them, without being chagrined, if they are not attended with ſucceſs: for there is always time enough for knowledge, but not a moment ſhould be loſt in forming the diſpoſition. Mr Wolmar lays, indeed, ſo great a ſtreſs on the firſt dawnings of reaſon, that he maintains, though his ſon ſhould be totally ignorant at twelve years old, he might know not a whit the leſs at fifteen; without conſidering that nothing is leſs neceſſary than for a man to be a ſcholar, and nothing more ſo than for him to be juſt and prudent.

You know that our eldeſt ſon reads already tole-

tolerably well. I will tell you how he became fond of it: I had formed a deſign to repeat to him, from time to time, ſome fable out of La Fontaine; and had already begun, when he aſked me one day, ſeriouſly, if ravens could talk? I ſaw immediately the difficulty of making him ſenſible of the difference between fable and falſehood; and laying aſide La Fontaine, got off as well as I could, being from that moment convinced that fables were only proper for grown perſons, and that ſimple truth only ſhould be repeated to children. In the room of La Fontaine, therefore, I ſubſtituted a collection of little intereſting and inſtructive hiſtories, taken moſtly from the Bible; and, finding he grew attentive to the tales, I compoſed others as entertaining as poſſible, and applicable to preſent circumſtances. Theſe I wrote out fair, in a fine book ornamented with prints, which I kept locked up, except at the times of reading. I read alſo but ſeldom, and never long at a time, repeating often the ſame ſtory, and commenting a little, before I paſſed on to another. When I obſerved him particularly intent, I pretended to recollect ſome orders neceſſary to be given, and left the ſtory unfiniſhed juſt in the moſt intereſting part, laying the book down negligently, and leaving it behind me. I was no ſooner gone than he would take it up, and go to his Fanny or ſomebody elſe, begging them to read the remainder of the tale: but as nobody was at his command, and every one had his inſtructions, he was frequently refuſed. One would give him a flat denial, another had ſomething elſe ado, a third muttered it out very low and badly, and a fourth would

would leave it in the middle, juſt as I had done before. When we ſaw him heartily wearied out with ſo much dependance, ſomebody intimated to him to learn to read himſelf, and then he need not aſk any body, but might turn it over at pleaſure. He was greatly delighted with the ſcheme, but where ſhould he find any one obliging enough to inſtruct him? This was a new difficulty, which we took care, however, not to make too great. In ſpite of this precaution, he was tired out three or four times; but of this I took no other notice, than to endeavour to make my little hiſtories the more amuſing, which brought him again to the charge with ſo much ardour, that though it is not ſix months ſince he began to learn, he will be very ſoon able of himſelf to read the whole collection.

It is thus I endeavour to excite his zeal and inclination to attain ſuch knowledge as requires application and patience: but though he learns to read, he gets no ſuch knowledge from books; for there is no ſuch in the books he reads, nor is the application to it at all proper for children. I am deſirous alſo of furniſhing their heads with ideas, and not with words; for which reaſon I never ſet them to get any thing by heart.

Never? ſaid I, interrupting her; that is ſaying a great deal. Surely you have taught him his prayers and his catechiſm! There you are miſtaken, replied ſhe. As to the article of prayers, I ſay mine every morning and evening, aloud in the nurſery; which is ſufficient to teach them, without obliging them to learn. As to their catechiſm, they know not what it is.

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What, Julia! your children never learn their catechiſm? No, my friend, my children do not learn their catechiſm. Indeed! ſaid I, quite ſurpriſed, ſo pious a mother!—I really do not comprehend you. Pray what is the reaſon they do not learn it? The reaſon is, ſaid ſhe, that I would have them ſome time or other believe it: I would have them be Chriſtians. I underſtand you, ſaid I; you would not have their faith conſiſt in mere words? you would have them believe, as well as know, the articles of their religion; and you judge very prudently that it is impoſſible for a man to believe what he does not underſtand. You are very difficult, ſaid Mr Wolmar, ſmiling; pray, were you a Chriſtian by chance? I endeavour to be one, anſwered I, reſolutely. I believe all that I underſtand of the Chriſtian religion, and reſpect the reſt, without rejecting it. Julia made me a ſign of approbation, and we reſumed the former ſubject of converſation.

After explaining herſelf on ſeveral other ſubjects, and convincing me of her active and indefatigable maternal zeal, ſhe concluded by obſerving, that her method exactly anſwered the two objects ſhe propoſed, namely, the permitting the natural diſpoſition and character of her children to diſcover themſelves, and empowering herſelf to ſtudy and examine it. They lie under no manner of reſtraint, continued ſhe, and yet cannot abuſe their liberty. Their diſpoſition can neither be depraved nor perverted; their bodies are left to grow, and their judgments to ripen at eaſe and leiſure: ſubjection debaſes not their minds, nor does flattery excite

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their ſelf-love; they think themſelves neither powerful men nor inſlaved animals, but children, happy and free. To guard them from vices not in their nature, they have, in my opinion, a better preſervative than lectures, which they would not underſtand, or of which they would ſoon be tired. This conſiſts in the good behaviour of thoſe about them; in the good converſation they hear, which is ſo natural to them all, that they ſtand in no need of inſtruction; it conſiſts in the peace and unity of which they are witneſſes; in the harmony which is conſtantly obſerved, and in the conduct and converſation of every one around them.

Brought up hitherto in natural ſimplicity, whence ſhould they derive thoſe vices, of which they have never ſeen the example? whence thoſe paſſions they have no opportunity to feel, thoſe prejudices which nothing they obſerve can impreſs? You ſee they betray no bad inclination: they have adopted no erroneous notions. Their ignorance is not opinionated; their deſires are not obſtinate; their propenſity to evil is prevented; nature is juſtified; and every thing ſerves to convince me, that the faults we accuſe her of, belong not to her, but to ourſelves.

Thus given up to the indulgence of their own inclinations without diſguiſe or alteration, our children do not take an external and artificial form, but preſerve exactly that of their original character. Thus it is that their character daily unfolds itſelf to obſervation, and gives us an opportunity to ſtudy the workings of nature, even to her moſt ſecret principles. Sure of never being reprimanded or puniſhed, they are ignorant

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of lying, or concealing any thing from us; and in whatever they ſay, whether before us or among themſelves, they diſcover without reſtraint whatever lies at the bottom of their hearts. Being left at full liberty to prattle all day long to each other, they are under no reſtraint before me. I never check them, enjoin them to ſilence, or indeed pretend to take notice of what they ſay, while they talk ſometimes very blameably, though I ſeem to know nothing of the matter. At the ſame time, however, I liſten to them with attention, and keep an exact account of all they ſay and do; for theſe are the natural productions of the ſoil which we are to cultivate. A naughty word in their mouths is a plant or ſeed foreign to the ſoil, ſown by the vagrant wind: ſhould I cut it off by a reprimand, it would not fail ere long to ſhoot forth again. Inſtead of that, therefore, I look carefully to find its root, and pluck it up. I am only, ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, the ſervant of the gardener; I only weed the garden, by taking away the vicious plants; it is for him to cultivate the good ones.

It muſt be acknowledged alſo, that with all the pains I may take, I ought to be well ſeconded to ſucceed, and that ſuch ſucceſs depends on a concurrence of circumſtances, which is perhaps to be met with nowhere but here. The knowledge and diſcretion of a ſenſible father are required, to diſtinguiſh and point out, in the midſt of eſtabliſhed prejudices, the true art of governing children from the time of their birth; his patience is required to carry it into execution, without ever contradicting his precepts by his

his practice; it is neceſſary that one's children ſhould be happy in their birth, and that nature ſhould have made them amiable; it is neceſſary to have none but ſenſible and well-diſpoſed ſervants about one, who will not fail to enter into the deſign of their maſter. One brutal or ſervile domeſtic would be enough to ſpoil all. In ſhort, when one thinks how many adventitious circumſtances may injure the beſt deſigns, and ſpoil the beſt concerted projects, one ought to be thankful to Providence for every thing that ſucceeds, and to confeſs that wiſdom depends greatly on good fortune. Say rather, replied I, that good fortune depends on prudence. Do not you ſee that the concurrence of circumſtances, on which you felicitate yourſelf, is your own doing, and that every one who approaches you is, in a manner compelled to reſemble you? O ye mothers of families! when you complain that your views, your endeavours, are not ſeconded, how little do you know your own power! Be but what you ought, and you will ſurmount all obſtacles; you will oblige every one about you to diſcharge their duty, if you but diſcharge yours. Are not your rights thoſe of nature? In ſpite of the maxims or practices of vice, theſe will be always reſpected by the human heart. Do you but aſpire to be women and mothers, and the moſt gentle empire on earth will be alſo the moſt reſpectable.

In the cloſe of our converſation Julia remarked, that her taſk was become much eaſier ſince the arrival of Harriot. It is certain, ſaid ſhe, I ſhould have had leſs trouble if I would have excited a ſpirit of emulation between the brothers.

But

But this ſtep appeared to me too dangerous; I choſe, therefore, rather to take more pains, and to run leſs riſque. Harriot has made up for this; for, being of a different ſex, their elder, fondly beloved by both, and very ſenſible for her age, I make a kind of governeſs of her, and with the more ſucceſs, as her leſſons are leſs ſuſpected to be ſuch.

With regard to herſelf, her education falls under my care; but the principles on which I proceed are ſo different, as to deſerve particular explanation. Thus much at leaſt I can ſay of her already, that it will be difficult to improve on the talents nature has given her, and that her merit is equal to her mother's, if her mother could poſſibly have an equal.

My Lord, as we now expect you every day here, this ſhould be my laſt letter. But I underſtand the reaſon of your ſtay with the army, and tremble for the conſequence. Julia is no leſs uneaſy, and deſires you will oftener let her hear from you; conjuring you, at the ſame time, to think how much you endanger the peace of your friends, by expoſing your perſon. For my part, I have nothing to ſay to you on this ſubject. Diſcharge your duty; the advice of puſillanimity is as foreign from my heart as from yours. My dear B——, I know too well, that the only cataſtrophe worthy of you, is, to loſe your life in the ſervice and for the honour of your country; but ought you not to give ſome account of your days to him, who has preſerved his only for your ſake?

LETTER CXL.

From Lord B——.

IT appears, by your two laſt letters, that a former one is miſſing, apparently the firſt you directed to me at the army, and in which you accounted for Mrs Wolmar's ſecret uneaſineſs. Not having received that letter, I imagine it was in the mail of one of our couriers, who was taken; you will, therefore, be pleaſed to recommunicate its contents. I am at a loſs to conjecture what they were, and am uneaſy about them. For again, I aſk, if happineſs and peace dwell not in Julia's mind, where will they find an aſylum on earth.

You may make her eaſy, as to the dangers ſhe imagines we are here expoſed to; we have to do with an enemy too expert to ſuffer us to purſue him. With a handful of men, he baffles our attempts, and deprives us of all opportunity to attack him. As we are very ſanguine, however, we may probably raiſe difficulties which the beſt generals would not be able to ſurmount, and at length oblige the French to fight us. I foreſee our firſt ſucceſs will coſt us dear, and that the victory we gained at Dettingen will make us loſe one in Flanders. We make head againſt a very able commander. Nor is this all; he poſſeſſes the love and confidence of his troops, and the French ſoldiers, when they have a good opinion of their leader, are *invincible*. On the contrary, they are good for ſo little when they are commanded by courtiers they deſpiſe,

deſpiſe, that frequently their enemies need only to watch the intrigues of the cabinet, and ſeize a proper opportunity, to vanquiſh with certainty the braveſt people on the continent: this they very well know. The duke of Marlborough, taking notice of the good look and martial air of a French ſoldier, taken priſoner at the battle of Blenheim, told him, if the French army had been compoſed of fifty thouſand ſuch men as he, it would not have been ſo eaſily beaten: Zounds, Sir, replied the grenadier, there are men enough in it like me, but it wants ſuch a man as you. Now ſuch a man at preſent commands the French troops, and is on our ſide wanting; but we have courage, and trouble ourſelves little about that.

At all events, however, I intend to ſee their operations for the remainder of the compaign, and am reſolved not to leave the army till it goes into winter-quarters. We ſhall all be gainers by ſuch a delay, the ſeaſon being too far advanced for us to think of croſſing the mountains this year. I ſhall ſpend the winter with you, and not go to Italy until the beginning of the ſpring. Tell Mr and Mrs Wolmar, I have thus changed my deſign, that I may have more time to contemplate that affecting picture you ſo pathetically deſcribe, and that I may have alſo the opportunity to ſee Mrs Orbe ſettled with them. Continue, my dear friend, to write with your uſual punctuality, and you will do me a greater pleaſure than ever: my equipage having been taken by the enemy, I have no books; but your letters ſupply me with amuſement.

LETTER CXLI.

To Lord B——.

WHAT pleaſure does your Lordſhip give me in acquainting me with your deſign of paſſing the winter with us at Clarens! but how dearly you make me pay for it by prolonging your ſtay at the army! What diſpleaſes me moſt, however, is to perceive that your reſolution of making a compaign was fixed before we parted, though you mentioned nothing of it to me. I ſee, my Lord, your reaſon for keeping it a ſecret, and cannot be pleaſed with you for it. Did you deſpiſe me ſo much as to think me unfit to accompany you? or have you ever known me mean enough to be attached to any thing I ſhould prefer to the honour of dying with my friend? But if it was improper for me to follow you to the army, you ſhould at leaſt have left me in London, which would have diſpleaſed me leſs than your ſending me hither.

It is plain, by your laſt letter, that one of mine is indeed miſſing; the loſs of which muſt have rendered the two ſucceeding ones in many reſpects obſcure; but the neceſſary explanations to make them intelligible, ſhall be ſoon tranſmitted to you. What is at preſent more particularly needful, is to remove your inquietude concerning Mrs Wolmar's ſecret uneaſineſs.

I ſhall not pretend to give you a regular continuation of the diſcourſe we had together after the departure of her huſband. Many things have paſſed ſince that time which make me for-

get

get great part of it; and it was resumed at so many different times during his absence, that I shall content myself, to avoid repetition, with giving you a summary of the whole.

In the first place, then, she informed me, that Mr Wolmar, who neglected nothing in his power to make her happy, was nevertheless the sole author of all her disquietude; and that the more sincere their mutual attachment grew, the greater was her affliction. Would you think it, my Lord? This gentleman so prudent, so reasonable, so little addicted to any kind of vice, so little subject to the tyranny of human passions, knows nothing of that faith which gives virtue all its merit; and in the innocence of an irreproachable life, feels only at the bottom of his heart the dreadful tranquility of the unbeliever. The reflection which arises from this contrast, in principle and morals, serves but to aggravate Julia's grief; she would think him even less culpable in disregarding the author of his being, had he more reason to dread his anger, or presumption to brave his power. That the guilty should be led to appease their consciences at the expence of truth; that the pride of thinking differently from the vulgar may induce others to embrace error, she can readily conceive; but, continued she, sighing, how a man so virtuous, and so little vain of his understanding, should be an infidel, surpasses my conception!

But before I proceed farther, it will be necessary to inform you of the peculiar character of this married couple. You are to conceive them as living solely for each other, and constantly taken up with their family; it being necessary

to know the ſtrictneſs of the union ſubſiſting between them, to comprehend how their difference of ſentiments, in this one article, is capable of diſturbing it. Mr Wolmar, educated in the cuſtoms of the Greek church, was not one of thoſe who could ſupport the abſurdity of ſuch ridiculous worſhip. His underſtanding, ſuperior to the feeble yoke impoſed on it, ſoon ſhook it off with contempt; rejecting, at the ſame time, every thing offered to his belief on ſuch doubtful authority; thus forced in a manner into impiety, he degenerates into atheiſm.

Having reſided ever ſince in Roman-catholic countries, he has never been induced to a better opinion of Chriſtianity, by what he found profeſſed there. Their religion, he ſaw, tended only to the intereſt of their prieſts; that it conſiſted entirely of ridiculous grimaces, and a jargon of words without meaning. He perceived that men of ſenſe and probity were unanimouſly of his opinion, and that they did not ſcruple to ſay ſo; nay, that the clergy themſelves, under the roſe, ridiculed in private what they inculcated and taught in public; hence he has often aſſured me, that, after having taken much time and pains in the ſearch, he never met with above three prieſts in his life that believed a God *.

By

* God forbid, that I ſhould give ſanction to aſſertions ſo raſh and ſevere: I inſinuate only, that there are people who make ſuch aſſertions; and for whoſe indiſcretion, the conduct of the clergy in every country and of all religions, often give but too much occaſion. So far am I, however, from intending meanly to ſkreen myſelf by this note, that my real opinion on this ſubject is, that no true believer can be a perſecutor and an

By endeavouring to ſet himſelf to rights in theſe matters, he afterwards bewildered himſelf in metaphyſical inquiries; and ſeeing only doubts and contradictions offer themſelves on every ſide, advanced ſo far, that, when he returned to the doctrines of Chriſtianity, he came too late, and incapable of either belief or conviction, the beſt arguments appeared to him inconcluſive. He finiſhed his career, therefore, by equally oppoſing all religious tenets whatever; and was converted from atheiſm only to become a ſceptic.

Such is the huſband which heaven has deſtined to Julia; to her whoſe true faith and ſincere piety cannot have eſcaped your obſervation; but to know how much her gentle ſoul is naturally inclined to devotion, requires that long intimacy with her in which her couſin and I have lived. It might be ſaid, no terreſtrial object being equal to her tenderneſs, her exceſs of ſenſibility is obliged to aſcend to its ſource: not like a ſaint Thereſa, whoſe amorous heart only changes its object: her's is a heart truly inexhauſtible, which neither love nor friendſhip can drain; but whoſe affections are ſtill raiſed to the only Being, worthy her ardent love *. Her love to God does not detach her from his creatures;

an enemy to toleration. If I were a magiſtrate, and the law inflicted death on atheiſts, I would begin to put it in execution, by burning the firſt man that ſhould come to accuſe and proſecute another.

* How! Will the Deity take up with only the refuſe of his creatures? Not ſo; all the love the human heart can poſſeſs for created beings is ſo little, that when they think it is replete, it is yet vacant; an infinite object only can poſſeſs it entirely.

tures; it gives her neither ſeverity nor ſpleen. But all her affections, proceeding from the ſame cauſe, and tempering each other, become more ſweet and attracting; ſhe would, I believe, be leſs devout, if her love toward her huſband, her children, her couſin, and me, were leſs than it is.

What is very ſingular alſo is, that ſhe knows but little of her own heart; and even complains that ſhe finds in herſelf, a ſoul barren of tenderneſs and incapable of love to the ſublimeſt object.——"Do what you will, ſhe often ſays, the heart is affected only by the interpoſition of the ſenſes, or the aſſiſtance of the imagination; and how ſhall we ſee or imagine the immenſity of the Supreme Being*? When I would raiſe myſelf up to the Deity, I know no longer where I am; perceiving no relation between us, I know not how to reach him, I neither ſee nor feel any thing, I drop into a kind of annihilation; and, if I may venture to judge of others by myſelf, I ſhould apprehend the ecſtaſies of the myſtics are no leſs owing to the fulneſs of the heart than the emptineſs of the head."

"What muſt I do then, added ſhe, to get rid of theſe deluſions of a wandering mind? I ſub-

* It is certain, the mind muſt be fatigued by the unequal taſk of contemplating the Deity. Such ideas are too ſublime for the vulgar, who require a more ſenſible object of devotion. Are the Catholics to blame, then, in filling their legends, their calendars, and their churches, with little angels, cherubs, and handſome ſaints? The infant Jeſus, in the arms of his modeſt and beautiful mother, is one of the moſt affecting, and, at the ſame time, the moſt agreeable ſpectacles that Chriſtian devotion can preſent to the view of the faithful.

ſubſtitute a leſs refined worſhip, but within the reach of my comprehenſion, in the room of thoſe ſublime contemplations which ſurpaſs my mental faculties. With regret I debaſe the majeſty of the Divinity, and interpoſe perceptible objects between the Deity and my feeble ſenſes; not being able to contemplate his eſſence, I contemplate at leaſt his works, and admire his goodneſs; but whatever method I take, inſtead of that pure love and affection he demands, it is only an intereſted gratitude I have to offer him."

Thus, every thing is productive of ſentiment in a ſuſceptible mind; the whole univerſe preſenting to Julia nothing but what is a ſubject for love and gratitude. On every ſide ſhe ſees and adores the benevolent hand of providence; her children are pledges committed by it to her care; ſhe receives its gifts in the produce of the earth; ſhe ſees her table covered by its bounty; ſhe ſleeps under its protection; ſhe awakes in peace under its care; ſhe is inſtructed by its chaſtiſements, is made happy by its favours: all the benefits ſhe reaps, all the bleſſings ſhe enjoys, are ſo many different ſubjects for adoration and praiſe. If the attributes of the Divinity are beyond her feeble ſight, ſhe ſees in every part of the creation, the common Father of mankind. To honour thus the ſupreme benevolence, is it not to ſerve as much as poſſible an infinite Being?

Imagine, my Lord, what pain it muſt give a woman of ſuch a diſpoſition, to ſpend a life of retirement with a man who, while he forms a part of her exiſtence, cannot partake of that

hope

hope which makes her exiſtence dear; not to be able to join him in praiſe and gratitude to the Deity, nor to converſe with him on the bleſſed futurity we have to hope from his goodneſs! to ſee him inſenſible, in doing good, to every thing which ſhould make virtue agreeable to us; and, with the ſtrangeſt abſurdity, thinking like an infidel and acting as a Chriſtian. Imagine her walking abroad with her huſband; the one admiring, in the beautiful verdure of ſpring, or golden fruits of autumn, the power and beneficence of the great Creator of all things; the other ſeeing in them nothing but a fortuitous combination of atoms, united only by chance. Imagine to yourſelf the ſituation of a married couple, having a ſincere regard for each other, who, for fear of giving offence, dare not indulge themſelves in ſuch ſentiments or reflections as the objects around them inſpire; but who are bound in duty, even from their reciprocal affections, to lay themſelves under continual reſtraint. Julia and I hardly ever walk out together, but ſome ſtriking or pictureſque object puts her in mind of this diſagreeable circumſtance. Alas! ſaid ſhe with great emotion to me one day, this beautiful proſpect before us, ſo lively, ſo animating in our eyes, is a dead and lifeleſs ſcene in thoſe of the unfortunate Wolmar. In all that harmony of created beings which nature diſplays, in vain do they unite to ſpeak their Maker's praiſe: Mr Wolmar perceives only a profound and eternal ſilence.

You who know Julia, who know what delight her communicative mind takes in imparting its ſentiments; think what ſhe muſt ſuffer

by

by ſuch conſtraint, even though it were attended with no other inconvenience, than that unſocial reſerve which is peculiarly diſagreeable between two perſons ſo intimately connected. But Julia has much greater cauſe of uneaſineſs. In vain does ſhe oppoſe thoſe involuntary terrors, thoſe dreadful ideas that ruſh upon her mind. They return with redoubled force, and diſturb every moment of her life. How horrid muſt it be for ſuch an affectionate wife to think the ſupreme Being is the avenger of his offended attributes! to think the happineſs of him on whom her own depends muſt end with his life; and to behold a reprobate of God in the father of her children! All her ſweetneſs of diſpoſition can hardly preſerve her from falling into deſpair at this horrible idea; her religion only, which makes her feel for the infidelity of her huſband, yielding her ſtrength to ſupport it. If heaven, ſays ſhe ſometimes, refuſes me the converſion of this honeſt man, I have but one bleſſing to aſk; which is, that I may die before him.

Such, my Lord, is the too juſt cauſe of Julia's chagrin; ſuch is the ſecret affliction which preys on her mind, and is aggravated by the care ſhe takes to conceal it. Atheiſm, which ſtalks abroad undiſguiſed among the Papiſts, is obliged to hide its head in every country, where reaſon, giving a ſanction to religion, deprives infidels of all excuſe. Its principals are naturally deſtructive; and, though they find partizans among the rich and great, who promote them, they are held in the utmoſt horror by an oppreſſed and miſerable people; who, ſeeing their tyrants thus freed from the only curb to reſtrain their

their inſolence, comfort themſelves with the hope of another life, their only conſolation in this. Mrs Wolmar, foreſeeing the ill conſequences of her huſband's ſcepticiſm, and being deſirous to preſerve her children from the bad effects of ſo dangerous an example, prevailed on him to keep his principles a ſecret; to which ſhe found no great trouble to perſuade a man who, though honeſt and ſincere, is yet diſcreet, unaffected, without vanity, and far from wiſhing to deprive others of a bleſſing which he himſelf cannot enjoy. In conſequence of this, he keeps his tenets to himſelf; he goes to church with us; conforms himſelf to cuſtom; and without making a verbal confeſſion of what he does not believe, avoids giving ſcandal, and pays all that reſpect to the eſtabliſhed religion of the country which the ſtate has a right to demand of its citizens.

They have been married now almoſt eight years, during which time Mrs Orbe only has been in the ſecret; nor probably would ſhe of herſelf ever have diſcovered it. Such care indeed is taken to ſave appearances, and with ſo little affectation, that, after having ſpent ſix weeks together in the greateſt intimacy, I had not the leaſt ſuſpicion; and ſhould perhaps never have known Mr Wolmar's ſentiments on religious matters, if Julia herſelf had not appriſed me of them.

Several motives determined her to that confidence: In the firſt place, a too great reſerve would have been incompatible with the friendſhip that ſubſiſts between us. Again, it would be only aggravating her uneaſineſs at her own coſt

coſt, to deny herſelf the conſolation of ſharing it with a friend. She was, beſides, unwilling that my preſence ſhould be long an obſtacle to the converſation they frequently held together on a ſubject ſhe had ſo much at heart. In ſhort, knowing you intended ſoon to join us here, ſhe was deſirous, with the conſent of her huſband, that you ſhould be previouſly made acquainted with his ſentiments; as ſhe hopes to find from your prudence and abilities, a ſupplement to our hitherto fruitleſs efforts, worthy of your character.

The opportunity ſhe laid hold of to place this confidence in me, made me ſuſpect alſo another reaſon, which, however, ſhe herſelf never inſinuated. Her huſband had juſt left us; we lived formerly together; our hearts had been enamoured of each other; they ſtill remembered their former tranſports; had they now forgot themſelves but for a moment, we had been plunged into guilt and infamy. I ſaw plainly ſhe was fearful of our private converſations, and ſought to prevent the conſequences ſhe feared; and I was myſelf too well convinced, by the remembrance of what happened at Meillerie, that they who confide leaſt in themſelves are the ſafeſt to be truſted.

Under theſe groundleſs apprehenſions, which her natural timidity inſpired, ſhe conceived ſhe could take no better precaution than always to have a witneſs to our converſation, whoſe preſence could not fail of being reſpected; and to call in, as a third perſon, the awful and upright Judge, who ſearches the heart, and is privy to the moſt ſecret actions of men. Thus, com-

mitting herſelf to the immediate protection of the Divinity, I found the Deity always between us. What criminal deſire could ever aſſail ſuch a ſafeguard? my heart grew refined by her zeal, and I partook of her virtue.

Theſe grave topics of diſcourſe took up almoſt all our private conferences in the abſence of her huſband; and ſince his return, we have reſumed them frequently in his preſence. He attends to our converſation, as if he was not at all concerned; and, without deſpiſing our endeavours, ſometimes adviſes us in our method of argument. It is this which makes me deſpair of ſucceſs; for had he leſs ſincerity, one might attack that vicious faculty of the mind that nouriſhes his infidelity; but, if we are to convince him by dint of reaſoning, where ſhall we find information that has eſcaped his knowledge, or arguments that have eluded his ſagacity? For my part, when I have undertaken to diſpute with him, I have found that all mine had been before exhauſted to no purpoſe by Julia; and that my reaſoning fell far ſhort of that pathetic eloquence which, dictated by the heart, flowed in perſuaſive accents from her tongue. I fear, my Lord, we ſhall never make a convert of this man. He is too frigid, not immoral; his paſſions are not to be moved; ſenſibility, that innate proof of the truth of religion, is wanting; and the want of this alone is enough to invalidate all others.

Notwithſtanding Julia's care to diſguiſe her uneaſineſs from him, he knows and partakes of it; his diſcernment will not permit him to be impoſed on. His own chagrin therefore, on account

count of her's, is but too apparent. Hence he has been tempted ſeveral times to affect a change of ſentiments; and, for the ſake of Julia's peace, to adopt tenets he could not in fact believe: but his ſoul was above the meanneſs of hypocriſy. This diſſimulation, inſtead of impoſing on Julia, would only have afforded a new cauſe of ſorrow. That ſincerity, that frankneſs, that union of hearts, which now comfort them under their afflictions, would then have no more ſubſiſted between them. Was it by making himſelf leſs worthy her eſteem that he could hope to calm her fears? No, inſtead therefore of deceiving her, he tells her plainly his thoughts; but this he does in a manner ſo ſimple and unaffected, ſo little diſdainful of received opinions, ſo unlike that ironical contemptuous behaviour of pretended free-thinkers, that ſuch melancholy confeſſions are extremely afflicting. As ſhe cannot, however, inſpire her huſband with that faith and hope with which ſhe herſelf is animated, ſhe ſtudies with the more aſſiduity to indulge him in all thoſe tranſient pleaſures to which his happineſs is confined. Alas! ſays ſhe weeping, if the poor unfortunate has his heaven in this life, let us make it, at leaſt, as agreeable to him as poſſible *!

That vail of ſorrow, which this difference in opinion throws over their union, gives a farther

* How much more natural is this humane ſentiment, than the horrid zeal of perſecutors, always employed in tormenting the unbeliever, as if, to damn him in this life, they themſelves were the forerunners of the devils? I ſhall ever continue to repeat it, A perſecutor of others cannot be a true believer himſelf.

proof of the irreſiſtable aſcendant of Julia, in the conſolation with which that affliction is tempered, and which perhaps no other perſon in the world would be able to apply. All their altercations, all their diſputes, on this important point, ſo far from giving riſe to ill-nature, contempt, or anger, generally end in ſome affecting ſcene which the more endears them to each other.

Our converſation falling yeſterday upon the ſame ſubject, as it frequently does when we three are by ourſelves, we were led into a diſpute concerning the origin of evil; in which I endeavoured to prove, that no abſolute or general evil exiſted in the ſyſtem of nature; but that even particular and relative evils were much leſs in reality, than in appearance; and that, on the whole, they were more than recompenſed by our particular and relative good. As an example of this, I appealed to Mr Wolmar himſelf, and, penetrated with a ſenſe of the happineſs of his ſituation, I deſcribed it ſo juſtly, and in ſuch agreeable colours, that he ſeemed himſelf affected with the deſcription. Such,' ſays he, interrupting me, 'are the deluſive arguments of Julia: ſhe always ſubſtitutes ſentiment in the 'place of reaſon, and argues ſo affectingly, 'that I cannot help embracing her at every re-'ply: 'Was it not her philoſophical preceptor,' added he, ſmiling, 'that taught her this man-'ner of reaſoning?' Two months before, this piece of pleaſantry would have cruelly diſconcerted me; but my firſt embarraſſment was now over, and I joined in the laugh: nor did Julia,

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tho' ſhe bluſhed a little, appear any more embarraſſed than myſelf.

We continued the diſpute. Wolmar, not contending about the quantity of evil, contented himſelf with obſerving, that, whether little or much, evil ſtill exiſted; and thence inferred the want either of power, wiſdom, or goodneſs, in the firſt cauſe. I, on my part, ſtrove to deduce the origin of phyſical evil from the properties of matter, and of moral evil from the free agency of man. I advanced, that nothing was impoſſible to the Deity, except the creation of ſubſtances as perfect and exempt from evil as himſelf. We were in the heat of our diſpute when I perceived Julia had left us. 'Can you gueſs 'whither ſhe is gone?' ſaid her huſband, ſeeing me look around for her. 'I ſuppoſe, ſaid I, to 'give ſome orders in her family.' 'No, re-'plied he, ſhe would not have left us at this 'time for that. Buſineſs of that kind is, I know 'not how, tranſacted without my ever ſeeing 'her interfere.' 'Then ſhe is gone to the nur-'ſery?' 'No; her children are not more at 'her heart than my converſion.' 'Well 'then, ſaid I, I know not what ſhe is gone a-'bout; but I am well aſſured ſhe is employed 'in ſome uſeful concern.' 'Still leſs, ſaid he 'coldly; come, come along; you ſhall ſee if I 'gueſs right.'

He then ſtept ſoftly along the room, and I followed him in the ſame manner: when, coming to the door of Julia's cloſet, and finding it ſhut, he threw it ſuddenly open. Oh! my Lord! what a ſight did this preſent us! Julia on her knees, her hands lifted up to heaven, and her

face bathed in tears! ſhe roſe up precipitately, wiping her eyes, hiding her face, and trying to eſcape us: never did I ſee ſo affecting a confuſion. Her huſband did not give her time to get away; but ran to her in a kind of tranſport; 'Ah, my dear! (ſaid he embracing her,) even the fervency of your prayers betrays the weakneſs of your cauſe: what prevents their efficacy? if your deſires were heard, they would preſently be granted.' "I doubt not, (ſaid ſhe,) with a devout confidence, but they will be granted; how ſoon or late, I leave to heaven. Could I obtain it, at the expence of my life, I ſhould lay it down with pleaſure, and think the laſt the beſt employed of all my days."

Come, my Lord, leave thoſe ſcenes of deſtruction you are now engaged in, and act a nobler part. Can a philoſopher prefer the honour of deſtroying mankind, to the virtue of endeavouring to ſave them *?

LETTER CXLII.

To Lord B——.

WHAT! a journey to Paris, after being abſent from us a whole campaign? Have you then, my Lord, entirely forgot Clarens, and its inhabitants? Are we leſs dear to you than Lord

* There is here a long letter wanting, from Lord B—— to Julia. It is mentioned in the ſequel; but, for particular reaſons, I was obliged to ſuppreſs it.

Lord H——? or are you more neceſſary to that friend, than to thoſe who expect you here? You oblige us to oppoſe our wiſhes to yours, and make me in particular lament that I have not intereſt enough at the court of France to prevent your obtaining the paſſports you wait for. But, no matter; go, viſit your worthy countryman. In ſpite of you both, we will be revenged of you for the preference given him; for, whatever pleaſure you may enjoy in his company, I know that, when you come to be with us, you will regret the time you ſtaid away.

On receiving your letter, I at firſt ſuſpected you were charged with ſome ſecret commiſſion. If peace were in view, where could be found a more worthy mediator?—But when do kings put their confidence in men of worth? Dare they liſten to truth? Do they know how to reſpect true merit? No, no, my dear Lord B——, you are not made for a miniſter of ſtate; and I think too well of you to imagine, if you had not been born a peer, you would ever have riſen to that dignity.

Come, my friend, you will be better at Clarens than at court. What an agreeable winter ſhall we paſs together, if the hope of ſeeing you here does not deceive me! Our happineſs is every day preparing, by the arrival of one or other of thoſe privileged minds, who are ſo dear to each other, ſo worthy of each other's eſteem, and who ſeem only to wait for you to be able to live without all the reſt of the world. On hearing what a lucky accident brought hither the baron's adverſary, you foreſaw the conſequences of that rencounter; it has really fallen out as you

you foretold. That old litigant, though almoſt as obſtinate and inflexible as his opponent, could not reſiſt the aſcendant we got over him. After ſeeing and converſing with Julia, he began to be aſhamed of contending with her father; and he ſet out for Bern in ſo favourable a diſpoſition, that we hear an accommodation is far advanced, and from the Baron's laſt letter expect his return home in a few days.

This you will already have been told by Mr Wolmar: but probably you do not yet know that Mrs Orbe, having ſettled her affairs, arrived here on Thurſday laſt, and reſides entirely at the houſe of her friend. As I knew beforehand the day of her arrival, I ſet out to meet her, unknown to Mrs Wolmar, whom ſhe had a mind to ſurpriſe: we met on this ſide Lutri, and returned together.

She is now more ſprightly and agreeable than ever; but unequal, abſent, giving little attention to any thing, and ſeldom replying; talking by fits and ſtarts; in a word, given up entirely to that reſtleſſneſs which is natural to us, when juſt on the point of obtaining what we have long ardently deſired. One would have thought, every minute, that ſhe was afraid of being obliged to return. Her journey, tho' ſo long deferred, was undertaken ſo precipitately, that it almoſt turned the heads of both miſtreſs and domeſtics. A whimſical diſorder appeared throughout the whole of her little baggage. If her woman imagined, as ſhe did every now and then, that ſhe had left ſomething behind, Clara as conſtantly aſſured her ſhe had put it into the ſeat of ſhe pleaſes. She has, beſides great good ſenſe,

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the coach; where, upon further inquiry, it was not to be found.

Being unwilling that Julia ſhould hear the rattling of her coach, ſhe got out in the avenue before we came to the gate, ſkipped acroſs the court-yard like a ſylph, and ran up-ſtairs with ſo much precipitation that ſhe was obliged to ſtop and take breath on the firſt landing-place, before ſhe could get up the next flight. Mr Wolmer came out to meet her, but ſhe was in too much hurry to ſpeak to him. On opening the door of Julia's apartment, I ſaw her ſitting near the window, with the little Harriot on her knee. Clara had prepared for her a fine compliment, in her way, a compound of affection and pleaſantry; but, on ſetting her foot over the threſhold, compliment and pleaſantry were all forgotten; ſhe flew forward to embrace her friend with a tranſport impoſſible to be deſcribed, crying out, Ah! my dear, dear couſin! Harriot, ſeeing her mother, fled to meet her, and crying out *Mama*, *Mama*, ran with ſo much force againſt her, that the poor child fell backwards on the floor. The effect of the ſudden appearance of Clara, the fall of Harriot, the joy, the apprehenſions, that ſeized upon Julia at that inſtant, made her give a violent ſhriek, and faint away. Clara was going to lift up the child when ſhe ſaw her friend turn pale, which made her heſitate whom to aſſiſt; till ſeeing me take up Harriot, ſhe flew to the relief of Julia; but, in endeavouring to recover her, ſunk down likewiſe in the ſame ſtate.

Harriot, ſeeing them both without motion, made ſuch loud lamentations as ſoon brought the

the little Frenchwoman into the room; the one clung about her mother, the other ran to her miſtreſs. For my part, I was ſo ſtruck, that I ſtalked about the room without knowing what I did, venting broken exclamations, and making involuntary motions to no purpoſe. Wolmar himſelf, the unſuſceptible Wolmar, ſeemed affected. But where is the heart of iron whom ſuch a ſcene of ſenſibility would not affect? Where is the unfortunate mortal from whom ſuch a ſcene of tenderneſs would not have extorted tears? Inſtead of running to Julia, this fortunate huſband threw himſelf on a ſettee, to enjoy the delightful ſcene. 'Be not afraid, 'ſays he, ſeeing our uneaſineſs.) In theſe accidents nature only is exhauſted for a moment, 'to recover itſelf with new vigour; they are 'never dangerous. Let me prevail on you not 'to interrupt the pleaſure I take in this tranſporting ſight, but partake it with me. How 'raviſhingly delightful muſt it be to you? I never taſted any thing like it, and am yet the 'unhappieſt perſon preſent.'

By this firſt ſcene, my Lord, at the moment of their meeting, you may judge the conſequences of the reunion of theſe charming friends. It has excited throughout the whole houſe a ſound of gladneſs, a tumultuous joy, that has not yet ſubſided. Julia was in ſuch an agitation as I never ſaw her in before; it was impoſſible for her to think of any thing all that day, but to gaze on her new viſitor, and load her with freſh careſſes. Nobody even thought of the ſaloon of Apollo; there was no occaſion for thinking of it when every place gave equal pleaſure. We

were

were hardly, even the next day, compoſed enough to think of making an entertainment on the occaſion. Had it not been for Wolmar, every thing would have gone wrong. In the mean time, every one was dreſſed in the beſt manner. No other care was admitted, than what tended to amuſement. The entertainment was not grand, but extremely joyous; throughout the whole there reigned a pleaſing confuſion and diſorder, which were its greateſt embelliſhment.

The morning was ſpent in putting Mrs Orbe in poſſeſſion of her employment of intendant or houſekeeper, and ſhe betrayed the ſame eagerneſs to enter in her office, as a child does after a new play-thing; at which we were highly diverted. In entering the ſaloon at dinner, both couſins were agreeably ſurpriſed to ſee on every ſide, their names in cypher, artificially formed with flowers. Julia gueſſed in an inſtant to whom ſhe was obliged for that piece of ingenuity, and embraced me in a tranſport of joy. Clara, contrary to former cuſtom, heſitated to follow her example; till Wolmar reprimanding her, ſhe bluſhed, and embraced me. Her ſweet confuſion, which I obſerved but too plainly, had an effect on me which I cannot deſcribe; but I could not feel myſelf in her arms without emotion.

In the afternoon a fine collation was ſet out in the gyneceum, or women's apartment; where for once Mr Wolmar and I were admitted, and were entertained agreeably. In the evening all the houſe, now increaſed by three perſons, aſſembled to dance. Clara ſeemed ornamented by the

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hands of the Graces, never having appeared to ſo much advantage as on that day. She danced, ſhe chatted, ſhe laughed, ſhe gave orders, ſhe was capable of every thing. Having proteſted ſhe would tire me out, ſhe danced down five or ſix country-dances in a breath; and then reproached me for footing it with the gravity of a philoſopher. I, on the other hand, told her ſhe danced like a fairy; that ſhe was full as miſchievous, and that ſhe would not let me reſt night nor day. You ſhall ſee to the contrary, ſays ſhe, here is that will ſet you to ſleep preſently: with that ſhe ſtarted up, and led down another dance.

She was really indefatigable: but it was otherwiſe with Julia: ſhe could hardly ſupport herſelf: her knees trembled, as ſhe danced; ſhe was too much affected to be chearful. One might obſerve a tear of joy every now and then trickle from her eyes. She regarded her couſin with a kind of delicious tranſport; took a pleaſure in conceiving herſelf the gueſt for whom the entertainment was made, and looked fondly upon Clara as the miſtreſs of the houſe who entertained her.

After ſupper, I played off the fire-works I had brought from China, which had a pretty effect. We ſat up great part of the night. At length it became time to break up: Mrs Orbe was tired, or had danced enough to be ſo, and Julia was deſirous ſhe ſhould not ſit up too late.

At length we became inſenſibly tranquil, and good order took place. Clara, giddy and inconſiderate as ſhe ſeems, knows how to check her ſallies, and put on an air of authority, when

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an exquiſite diſcernment, the penetration of Wolmar, and the goodneſs of Julia; and tho' extremely liberal, has a good deal of diſcretion in her generoſity: for, though left ſo young a widow, and charged with the care of a daughter, the fortunes of both increaſe in her hands; ſo that there is no reaſon to apprehend the houſe will, under her direction, be leſs prudently governed than before. In the mean time, Julia has the ſatisfaction of devoting herſelf entirely to an occupation more agreeable to her taſte; that is, the education of her children: and I doubt not but Harriot will profit greatly by one of her mothers having relieved the other. I ſay her mothers, becauſe by the manner in which they both behave to her, it is difficult to diſtinguiſh which is really ſo; ſo that ſome ſtrangers, who arrived here to-day, are ſtill, or appear to be, in doubt about it. In fact, they both call her *Harriot*, or *my child*, indifferently. She calls the one her *Mama*, and the other her *little Mama*: ſhe has the ſame love for both, and pays them equal obedience. If the ladies are aſked whoſe child it is, each anſwers it is her's; if Harriot be queſtioned, ſhe ſays that ſhe has two mothers; ſo that it is no wonder people are puzzled. The moſt diſcerning, however, think her the child of Julia; Harriot, whoſe father was of a fair complexion, being fair like her, and ſomething reſembling her in features. A greater maternal tenderneſs appears alſo in the ſoft regards of Julia, than in the ſprightlier looks of Clara. The child puts on alſo a more reſpectful air, and is more reſerved in her behaviour, before the former. She places herſelf involun-

tarily oftener on the ſide of Julia, becauſe ſhe moſt frequently talks to her. It muſt be owned, all appearances are in favour of our *little mama*; and I obſerve the deception is ſo agreeable to the two couſins, that it may be ſometimes perhaps intended.

In a fortnight, my Lord, nothing will be wanting here but your preſence; and when you are arrived, I ſhall have a very bad opinion of that man who ſhall be tempted to ranſack the world for a virtue, or a pleaſure, which may not here be found.

LETTER CXLIII.

To Lord B——.

I HAVE attempted every evening, for theſe three days paſt, to write to you; but, thro' the fatigue of the day, I become too ſleepy to effect my purpoſe at night, and in the morning I am again called upon early to my employment. A pleaſing tranquillity, more intoxicating than wine, takes poſſeſſion of my ſenſes, and I cannot without regret bear a moment's avocation from the new and agreeable amuſements which my preſent ſituation affords.

Indeed, I cannot conceive that I would be diſſatisfied any where in ſuch company; but do you know why Clarens in itſelf is agreeable? It is, that here I find myſelf actually in the country, which I could hardly ever ſay before. The inhabitants of cities know not how to enjoy the country;

country; they even know not what it is to be there; or, when there, are at a loſs what to do with themſelves. They are ignorant of all ruſtic buſineſs and amuſements; they deſpiſe them; they ſeem at home as if they were in a foreign country, and I am not at all ſurpriſed that they are diſpleaſed with it. Among the country people we ſhould live as they do, or not aſſociate with them at all. The Pariſians, who imagine they go into the country, miſtake the thing; they carry Paris along with them. They are attended with their fingers, their wits, their authors, and their paraſites. Cards, muſic, and plays, engroſs all their attention; their tables are ſpread in the ſame manner as at Paris; they ſit down to their meals at the ſame hours; are ſerved with the ſame diſhes, and in the ſame pomp: in a word, they do juſt the ſame things in the country as they did in town, where, for that reaſon, it had been better they had ſtayed; for, however opulent they are, or careful to omit nothing they are accuſtomed to, they always find ſomething wanting, and perceive the impoſſibility of carrying the town altogether along with them. Thus, that variety they are ſo fond of, eludes their ſearch; they are acquainted only with one manner of living, and are therefore in a continual liſtleſſneſs.

Every rural employment to me affords ſomething agreeable; nor is there any ſo painful and laborious, as to excite our compaſſion for the labourer. As the object of both public and private utility, agriculture is peculiarly intereſting; and, as it was the firſt employment of man in his ſtate of innocence, it fills the mind with the

moſt pleaſing ſenſations, and affects us with the agreeable ideas of the golden age. The imagination cannot help being warmed by the proſpects of ſeed-time and harveſt: if we look around us, and ſee the fields covered with haymakers, and with flocks of ſheep, ſcattered at a diſtance, one is affected with a pleaſure that riſes inſenſibly. Thus ſometimes the voice of nature ſoftens our ſavage hearts, and, though its dictates are too often fruitleſs, it is ſo agreeable that we never hear it without pleaſure.

It muſt be acknowledged, that the miſery which appears on the face of ſome countries, where the taxes devour the produce of the earth, the eager avarice of a greedy collector, the inflexible rigour of an inhuman maſter, take away much of the beauty of the proſpect. To ſee the poor jaded cattle ready to expire under the whip; to ſee the unhappy peaſants themſelves emaciated with faſting, clothed in rags, groaning with fatigue, and hardly ſecured from the inclemencies of the weather by their wretched huts; theſe are deplorable ſights; and it makes one almoſt bluſh to be a man, when one thinks how the very vitals of ſuch poor objects are drained to ſatisfy their cruel maſters. But what pleaſure is it, on the other hand, to ſee the prudent and humane proprietors, in milder governments, make the cultivation of their lands the inſtrument of their benevolence, their recreation, their pleaſures! to ſee them with open hands diſtribute the bounties of Providence! to ſee their ſervants, their cattle, and every creature about them, fatten on the abundance that flows from their barns, their cellars and their granaries! to ſee them

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ſurrounded with peace and plenty, and make, of the employment that enriches them, a perpetual feaſt! How is it poſſible for one to be inattentive to the agreeable illuſions which ſuch objects create? We forget the age we live in, and the vices of our contemporaries, and are tranſported in imagination to the patriarchal æra: we are deſirous to ſet one's own hands to work; to join in the ruſtic employment, and partake of its attendant happineſs. Oh! how delightful were the days of love and innocence, when the women were affectionate and modeſt, the men ſimple and content? Such were the days when a lover did not regret fourteen years of ſervitude to obtain his miſtreſs. Fair daughter of Laban! keeper of thy father's flocks, how amiable muſt thou have been! how irreſiſtable thy charms! No, never doth beauty exert its power ſo much as when in the midſt of rural ſcenes and ruſtic ſimplicity. Here is the real ſeat of its empire; here ſhe ſits on her throne, ſurrounded by the Graces; adorned by whoſe hands, ſhe captivates all beholders. Excuſe this rhapſody, my Lord; I return now to my ſubject.

The autumnal heats have for this month paſt been preparing a favourable vintage, which the froſt has already induced us to begin *; the parched leaves falling off the vines, and expoſing to view the cluſtered grapes, whoſe juicy ripeneſs invites the hands of the gatherers. Vines loaded with the ſalutary fruit, which heaven beſtows

* The vintage is very late in this country; becauſe the principle crop is of white wines, to which the froſt is of ſervice.

ſtows on the unfortunate to ſolace all their woes; the ſound of the caſks, tubs, and tons, which they are hooping on every ſide; the ſongs of the gatherers with which the vintage re-echoes; the continual trotting backwards and forwards of thoſe who carry the grapes to the preſs; the harſh din of the ruſtic inſtruments that animate the people to work; the agreeable and affecting picture of a general good humour, which ſeems to be extended at that time over the face of the whole earth; add to theſe the fog, which the ſun exhales in a morning, and draws up like the curtain of a theatre, to diſplay ſo delightful a ſcene; all conſpire to give it the air of an entertainment; and that an entertainment which is the more pleaſing on reflection, that it is the only one in which mankind have art enough to join utility with delight.

Mr Wolmar, who has one of the beſt vineyards in the country, has made all the neceſſary preparations for his vintage. His backs, his wine-preſs, his cellar, his caſks, are all ready for that delicious liquor for which they are deſigned. Mrs Wolmar herſelf takes charge of the crop; the choice of the labourers, and the order and diſtribution of the ſeveral parts of the work falling to her ſhare. Mrs Orbe takes care of all entertainments, and of the payment of the day-labourers, agreeable to the police eſtabliſhed here, the laws of which are never broken or infringed. As to my part, I am ſet to inſpect the preſs, and enforce the directions of Julia, who cannot bear the ſteam of the backs; and Clara did not fail to recommend me to this employ,

employ, as it is ſo well adapted, ſhe ſays, to a toper.

Every one having thus an allotted taſk, we are all up early in the morning, and are aſſembled to go to the vineyard. Mrs Orbe, who never thinks herſelf ſufficiently employed, undertakes further to obſerve and rate thoſe who are idle; in doing which I can ſafely ſay, with reſpect to me at leaſt, that ſhe acquits herſelf with a malicious aſſiduity. As to the old baron, while we are all employed, he walks out with his gun, and comes every now and then to take me from my work to go with him a thruſh-ſhooting; and I am taxed by my companions with being ſecretly engaged to him; ſo that by degrees I loſe my old name of philoſopher, and get that of an idler; appellations which in reality are not very different.

You ſee, by what I have told you of the baron, that we are quite reconciled, and that Wolmar has reaſon to be content with his ſecond experiment *. Shall I hate the father of my

* This will be better underſtood by the following extract of a letter from Julia, not inſerted in this collection. "This, ſays Mr Wolmar, taking me aſide, is the ſecond proof I intended to put him to; if he had not paid great reſpect to your father, I ſhould have miſtruſted him. But, ſaid I, how ſhall we reconcile that reſpect to the antipathy that ſubſiſts between them? It ſubſiſts no longer, replied he. Your father's prejudices have done St Preux all the harm they could; he has no farther reaſon to fear them; he is not angry at your father, but pities him. The baron, on his ſide, is no longer jealous of St Preux; he has a good heart; is ſenſible he has injured him, and is ſorry for it. I ſee they will do very well together, and will for the future ſee each other with pleaſure. From this moment, therefore, I ſhall put an entire confidence in him."

my friend! No, were I his ſon, I could not reſpect him more than I do. In fact, I know not any man more ſincere, more open, more generous, or more honourable in every reſpect, than this old gentleman. But the extravagance of his notions and prejudices is odd enough. Since he is certain I cannot be united to his family, he is extremely civil; and, provided I be not his ſon-in-law, he will readily give up every thing, and allow me a ſuperiority to himſelf. The only thing I cannot forgive him, is, that when we are alone, he will ſometimes rally the pretended philoſopher on his former lectures. His pleaſantry on this head hurts me, and I am always vexed at it; but he turns my reſentment into ridicule, and ſays, "Come along, let us go bring down a thruſh or two; we have carried this argument far enough." And then he calls out, as we go out of doors: "Here, Clara, Clara! provide a good ſupper for your maſter; I am going to get him an appetite." Notwithſtanding his age, alſo, I can aſſure you, he bruſhes among the vines with his gun, with as much activity as myſelf, and is incomparably a better markſman. I have ſome ſatisfaction, however, in that he dares not drop a word before his daughter, the little ſcholar preſcribing no leſs to her father, than to her preceptor.—I return to our vintage.

We have been employed now theſe eight days in this agreeable occupation; and yet we have hardly done half our work. Beſides the wines intended for ſale and for common uſe, which are only ſimply though carefully made, our benevolent fairy makes others of a more exquiſite fla-

flavour for us drinkers, I myſelf aſſiſting in the magical operations. We make wines of all countries from the grapes of one vineyard: to make one ſort ſhe orders the ſtalks of the bunches to be twiſted when the grape is ripe, and lets them dry by the heat of the ſun upon the ſtock; for another, ſhe has the grapes picked and ſtoned before they are put into the preſs; again, for a third ſort, ſhe has the red grapes gathered before ſun-riſing, and carefully conveyed to the preſs, freſh with their bloom, and covered with the morning-dew, to make white wine. She makes a ſweet wine, by putting into the caſks *muſt*, reduced to a ſyrup by evaporation; a dry wine by checking its fermentation; a bitter cordial by ſteeping wormwood *; and a muſcadel wine, with the help of ſimples. All thoſe different wines have their peculiar methods of preparation; every one of which is ſimple and wholeſome. And thus an induſtrious œconomy makes up for a diverſity of ſoils, and unites twenty climates in one.

You cannot conceive with what aſſiduity, with what alacrity, all our buſineſs is done. We ſing and laugh all day long, without the leaſt interruption to our work. We live altogether in the greateſt familiarity; are all treated on a footing, and yet no one forgets himſelf. The ladies put on none of their fine airs; the country women are modeſt; the men droll, but never rude. Thoſe are the moſt careſſed who ſing the beſt

* In Switzerland they drink a great deal of bitter wine; and, in general, as the herbs of the Alps have more virtue than the plants of other countries, they make great uſe of infuſions.

beſt ſongs, tell the beſt ſtories, or hit off the beſt joke. Our good underſtanding even gives riſe to pleaſant bickerings between us; and our mutual raillery is exerted only to ſhew how far we can bear with good temper each other's ſeverity. There is no returning home to play the *gentle folks*: we ſtay all the day long in the vineyard; Julia having cauſed a lodge to be built there, whither we retreat to warm ourſelves when cold, or to ſhelter us when it rains. We dine with the peaſants, and at their hour, as well as work with them. We eat their ſoup, a little courſe indeed, but very good, and ſeaſoned with excellent herbs. We laugh not at their downright behaviour and ruſtic compliments; but, in order to free them from conſtraint, give unto their own ways without affectation. This complaiſance on our ſide, alſo, is not loſt upon them; they are ſenſible of it; and, ſeeing that we are ſo ready to go out of our way for them, they are more willing to go on in their own for us. At dinner the children are brought from the houſe, and paſs the reſt of the day in the vineyard. How rejoiced are the peaſants to ſee them! then, taking them up in their ſturdy arms, they bleſs them, and wiſh heaven may prolong their days, to reſemble their parents, and make them in like manner a bleſſing to their country. When I think that the moſt of theſe men have borne arms, and underſtand the uſe of the ſword and muſket, as well as the management of the hoe and pruning-knife, in ſeeing Julia ſo loved and reſpected by them, and herſelf and children received with ſuch affecting acclamations, I cannot help calling to mind the virtuous and illuſ-

trious

trious Agrippina, ſhewing her ſon to the troops of Germanicus. Incomparable Julia! who exerciſes in the ſimplicity of private life, the deſpotic power of wiſdom and beneficence; your perſon a dear and ſacred truſt depoſited in the hands of your country-men, every one of whom would defend and protect you at the hazard of his own life; it is yours to live more ſecurely, more honourably in the midſt of a whole people, who loves you, than monarchs ſurrounded with their guards.

In the evening, we all return home chearfully together; the work-people being lodged and boarded with us all the time of the vintage; and even on Sundays, after the evening ſervice, we aſſemble and dance together till ſupper-time. On the other days of the week, alſo, we remain all together, after we are returned home, except the baron, who, eating no ſupper, goes to bed early, and Julia, who with her children ſtays with him till his bed-time. Thus, from the time we take upon ourſelves the buſineſs of the vintage till we quit it, we never once mix the city and country-life together. Theſe Saturnalia are much more agreeable and diſcreet than thoſe of the Romans The contraſt they affected was too prepoſterous to improve either the maſter or the ſlave; but the peaceful equality which prevails here, re-eſtabliſhes the order of nature, is productive of inſtruction to ſome, of conſolation to others, and of a friendly connection between all *. Our aſſembly-room is an old

* If hence ariſes a kind of equality not leſs agreeable to thoſe who deſcend, than to thoſe who are elevated, does it not fol-

old hall, with a great chimney and a good fire in it. On the mantle-piece are lighted up three lamps, made by Mr Wolmar's orders, of tin, juſt to catch the ſmoak and reflect the light. To prevent giving riſe to envy, every thing is carefully avoided that might in the eyes of theſe poor people appear more coſtly than what they meet with at home; no other mark of opulence being diſplayed, than the choice of the beſt of common things, and a little more profuſion in their diſtribution. Supper is ſerved upon two long tables; where the pomp and luxury of entertainments is amply ſupplied by good humour and plenty. Every one ſits down to table, maſter, labourers, and ſervants; every one without diſtinction gets up to help himſelf, without exception or preference; the whole repaſt ending in gratitude and feſtivity. All drink at their diſcretion, ſubject to no other rules than thoſe of decency and ſobriety. The preſence of ſuperiors, whom they ſo truly reſpect, keeps the work-people within bounds; yet lays no reſtraint on their eaſe and chearfulneſs. And ſhould any one happen to forget himſelf and give offence, the

follow, that all conditions of life are in themſelves almoſt indifferent, ſince people are not always confined to them? Beggars are unhappy, becauſe they are always beggars; kings are miſerable becauſe they always kings. People in a middling condition are the happieſt, becauſe they can eaſier vary their circumſtances, to enjoy the pleaſures of thoſe above or thoſe below them. They are alſo more intelligent, becauſe they have an opportunity of knowing more of the prejudices of mankind, and of comparing them with each other. This ſeems the principal reaſon why, generally ſpeaking, people of a middling ſtation in life are the moſt happy, and are perſons of the beſt ſenſe.

the company is not diſturbed by reprimands, but the offender gets his diſmiſſion on the morrow.

Thus do I take advantage of the pleaſures of the country and of the ſeaſon. I reſume the freedom of living after the manner of the country, and to drink pure wine pretty often: but I drink none that is not poured out by the hands of one or other of the two couſins; who take upon them to meaſure my thirſt by the ſtrength of my head, and to manage my reaſon as they think proper; nor does any one know better how to manage it, or has like them the art to give or take it away from me at pleaſure. When the fatigue of the day, or the length and feſtivity of the repaſt, add to the ſtrength of the liquor, I indulge myſelf without reſtraint in the ſallies it inſpires. They are no longer ſuch as I need ſuppreſs, even in the preſence of the ſagacious Wolmar. I am no longer afraid his penetrating eye ſhould ſee into the bottom of my heart: and, when a tender idea ariſes in my memory, one look from Clara diſſipates it, one look of Julia makes me bluſh for my weakneſs.

After ſupper, we ſit up an hour or two to ſtrip hemp; every one ſinging a ſong in turn. Sometimes the women ſing all together, or one ſings alone, and the reſt join in chorus to the burden of the ſong. Moſt of their ſongs are old tales, ſet to no very agreeable tunes. There is, notwithſtanding, ſomething antique and affecting, which on the whole is very pleaſing. The words are generally very ſimple, unaffected, and often very ſorrowful: they are, nevertheleſs, entertaining. Clara cannot forbear ſmiling, Julia bluſhing, and myſelf from giving a ſigh, when the ſame turns and expreſſions are repeated in

theſe ſongs which have heretofore been made uſe of between us. On thoſe occaſions, the remembrance of times paſt ruſhes upon my mind: I am ſeized with a trembling, an inſupportable burden oppreſſes my heart, and leaves ſo deep an impreſſion of ſorrow that I can hardly ſhake it off. I find, nevertheleſs, in theſe evenings, a ſort of pleaſure which I cannot deſcribe, and which is nevertheleſs very great. The union of people of different conditions, the ſimplicity of their occupation, of eaſe, concord, and tranquillity, the peaceful ſenſation it awakes in the ſoul; theſe altogether have ſomething affecting that diſpoſes every one to make choice of the moſt intereſting ſongs. The concert of female voices is alſo not without its charms. For my part, I am convinced, that of all kinds of harmony there is none ſo agreeable as ſinging in uniſon; and that we only require a variety of concords, becauſe our taſte is depraved. Does not harmony in fact exiſt in every ſingle note? what then can we add to it, without changing the proportion which nature has eſtabliſhed in the relation of harmonious ſounds. She has done every thing in the beſt manner; but we would do better, and ſo ſpoil all.

There is as great an emulation among us about the work of the evening, as about that of the day: and a piece of roguery I was guilty of yeſterday, brought me into a little diſgrace. As I am not the moſt expert at hemp-peeling, and am ſometimes abſent in thought, I begun to be tired with always being pointed at for doing the leaſt work. I ſhovelled the ſtalks with my feet therefore from my next neighbours, to enlarge

large my own heap; but that inexorable Mrs Orbe, perceiving it, made a ſign to Julia, who, detecting me in the fact, reprimanded me ſeverely. Come, come, ſays ſhe aloud, I will have no injuſtice done here, though in jeſt; it is thus people accuſtom themſelves to cheating, and prove rogues in good earneſt, and then, what is worſe, treat it but as a jeſt.

In this manner we paſs our evenings. When it is near bed-time, Mrs Wolmar ſtands up, and ſays, Come, now let us to our fire-works. On which, every one takes up his bundle of hemp-ſtalks, the honourable proofs of his labour, which are carried in triumph into the middle of the court-yard, and there laid as trophies in a heap, and ſet on fire. Every one, however, has not indiſcriminately this honour; but thoſe to whom Julia adjudges it, by giving the torch to him or her who has done moſt work that evening; and when this happens to be herſelf, ſhe does it with her own hands, without more to do. This ceremony is accompanied with acclamations and clapping of hands. The ſtalks ſoon burn up in a blaze, which aſcends to the clouds; a real bonfire, about which we laugh and ſing, till it is out. After this, the whole company are ſerved with liquor, and every one drinks to the health of the conqueror, and goes to bed, content with a day paſſed in labour, chearfulneſs, and innocence, which he would willingly begin again on the morrow, the next after that, and every morrow to the end of his days.

LETTER CXLIV.

To Mr WOLMAR.

ENJOY, my dear Wolmar, the fruits of your benevolent care. Receive the ſincere acknowledgments of a heart which you have taken ſo much pains to render worthy of being offered to your acceptance. Never did any man undertake ſo arduous a taſk; never did any one attempt what you have executed; nor did ever a ſuſceptible and grateful mind, feel more than that with which you have inſpired me. Mine had loſt its force, its vigour, its very being; but you have reſtored them all: I was dead to virtue, to happineſs; and owe to you that moral life, to which I feel myſelf raiſed. O my benefactor! my father! in giving myſelf up entirely to you, I can only offer, as to the Deity, the gifts of which yourſelf have been the donor.

Muſt I confeſs to you my weakneſs and my fears? Hitherto I have always diſtruſted myſelf. It is not a week ago that I bluſhed for the weakneſs of my heart, and thought all our pains had been loſt. That cruel and diſcouraging moment, however, thanks to heaven and you, is paſt, never to return. I do not think myſelf cured, only becauſe you tell me ſo, but becauſe I feel it: I ſtand no longer in need of your anſwering for me; you have put me in a ſtate to anſwer for myſelf. It was neceſſary for me to be abſent from you and Julia, to know what I ſhould be without your ſupport. It is at a diſtance

ſtance from her abode, that I learn not to be afraid to approach her.

I write the particulars of our journey to Mrs Orbe; and ſhall not repeat them here; I am not unwilling you ſhould know my foibles; but I have not the courage to tell you of them. My dear Wolmar, it is my laſt fault. I feel myſelf already ſo far from being liable to commit the like again, that I cannot think of it without diſdain; and yet it is ſo little a while ſince, that I cannot acknowledge it without ſhame. You who can ſo readily forgive my errors, will doubtleſs forgive the ſhame which attends my repentance.

Nothing is now wanting to complete my happineſs. My Lord B—— has told me all. Shall I then, my dear friend, be devoted entirely to you? ſhall I educate your children? ſhall the eldeſt of the three be preceptor to the reſt? With what ardour have I not deſired it? Often has the pleaſing hope of being thought worthy of ſuch employment, redoubled my aſſiduity to ſecond your paternal care. How often have I not expreſſed my earneſtneſs, in this particular, to Julia! with what pleaſure have I not interpreted the diſcourſe of both of you in my favour? But although ſhe was convinced of my zeal for your ſervice, and ſeemed to approve of its object, ſhe never entered ſo explicitely into my deſigns as to encourage me to ſpeak more openly. I was ſenſible I ought rather to merit that honour than aſk for it. I expected of you and her that proof of your confidence and eſteem. I have not been deceived in my expec-

tation; and believe me, my dear friends, you ſhall not be deceived in yours.

You know, that, in conſequence of our converſation on the education of our children, I have thrown together upon paper ſome of thoſe ſentiments which ſuch converſation furniſhed me with, and which you approved. Since my departure, ſome new reflections have ſuggeſted themſelves on the ſame ſubject: I have reduced the whole into a kind of ſyſtem, which, when I have properly digeſted, I ſhall communicate to you for your examination. I do not think, however, I ſhall be able to make it fit for your inſpection till after our arrival at Rome. My ſyſtem is a ſupplement to that of Julia; or rather, it is nothing more than a connection and illuſtration of her's; for it conſiſts only in rules to prevent the natural diſpoſition from being ſpoiled, in ſubjecting it to the laws and cuſtoms of ſociety.

I have recovered my reaſon by your care: my heart is again ſound and at liberty: I ſee myſelf beloved by all whoſe love I could wiſh to poſſeſs: futurity preſents me with an agreeable proſpect. Surely, therefore, my ſituation ſhould be delightful; but it is decreed, my ſoul ſhall never enjoy tranquillity. As the end of our journey approaches, I ſee the criſis of the fate of my illuſtrious friend: it is I, if I may ſo ſay, who ought to decide it. Cannot I at leaſt do that once for him which he has ſo often done for me? cannot I nobly diſcharge the greateſt and moſt important duty of my life? My dear Wolmar, I retain all your leſſons in my heart; but, to make them uſeful, why do not I poſſeſs

alſo

alſo your ſagacity? Ah, could I but one day ſee Lord B—— happy! could I, agreeable to your projects, ſee us but all aſſembled together never to part again! could I entertain a wiſh for any thing on earth beſides! Yes, one; the accompliſhment of which depends not on you, nor me, nor on any other perſon in the world; but on him who has a reward in ſtore for the virtues of Julia, and keeps a ſecret regiſter of your good actions.

LETTER CXLV.

To Mrs ORBE.

WHERE are you, my charming couſin? O where is the amiable confident of that feeble heart, which is, on ſo many accounts, yours, and to which you have ſo often adminiſtered conſolation? come, and let me lay open to you the confeſſion of its laſt error. Is it not always your province to puriſy it by confeſſion and pardon? is there a fault which it can reproach itſelf with after it hath confeſſed it to you? No, it is no longer the ſame; and its regeneration is owing to you: you have given me a new heart, which now offers you its firſt ſervices: but I ſhall not think myſelf quite free from that which I quit, until I have depoſited it in your hands; there, then, O thou who wert witneſs to its firſt beatings, receive now its laſt.

The moment of my life in which I had moſt reaſon to be contented with myſelf was that in which I left you. Recovered of my errors, I looked

looked upon that inſtant as the tardy æra of my return to my duty. I begun it therefore, by paying off part of that immenſe debt I owed to friendſhip, in leaving ſo delightful an abode to follow a benefactor, a philoſopher, who pretending to ſtand in need of my ſervices, put the ſucceſs of his to the proof. The more diſagreeable my departure, the more I piqued myſelf on making ſo great a ſacrifice. After having ſpent half my lifetime in nouriſhing an unhappy paſſion, I conſecrated the other half to juſtify it, and to render, by my virtues, a more worthy homage to her, who ſo long received that of my heart. I proudly contemplated the firſt of my days in which I had neither given occaſion for my own bluſhes, for yours, for her's, nor for thoſe of any one who was dear to me.

My Lord B——, being apprehenſive of a ſorrowful parting, was for our ſetting out early, without taking a formal leave; but though hardly any body was ſtirring in the houſe, we could not elude your friendly vigilance. Your door half open, and your woman on the watch; your coming out to meet us, and our going in and finding a table ſet out and tea made ready; all theſe circumſtances brought to my mind thoſe of former times; and, comparing my preſent departure with that which came to my remembrance, I found myſelf ſo very differently diſpoſed to what I was on the former occaſion, that I rejoiced to think Lord B—— was a witneſs of that difference, and hoped to make him forget at Milan the ſhameful ſcene of Beſançon. I never found myſelf ſo reſolute before; I prided myſelf in diſplaying my temper before you; I behaved

behaved with more fortitude than you had ever ſeen in me; and gloried, in parting, to think I had appeared before you ſuch as I was going ever afterwards to be. This idea added to my courage; I ſupported my ſpirits by your eſteem; and perhaps ſhould have left you without weeping, if a tear, trickling from your eyes, had not drawn a ſympathetic drop from mine.

I left you with a heart fully ſenſible of its obligations, and particularly penetrated with ſuch as your friendſhip has laid me under; reſolved to employ the reſt of my life in deſerving them. My Lord B——, taking me to taſk for my paſt follies, laid before me no very agreeable picture; and I knew by the juſt ſeverity with which he cenſured my foibles, that he was little afraid of imitating them. He pretended, nevertheleſs, to be apprehenſive of it; and ſpoke to me with ſome uneaſineſs of his journey to Rome, and the unworthy attachments which, in ſpite of himſelf, led him thither: but I ſaw plainly that he exaggerated his own dangers, to engage my attention the more to him, and draw it off from thoſe to which I was myſelf expoſed.

Juſt as we got into Villeneuve, one of our ſervants, who was but badly mounted, was thrown off his horſe, and got a ſmall contuſion on his head: on which his maſter had him bled, and determined to ſtay there that night. We accordingly dined early, and afterwards took horſes and went to Bex, to ſee the ſalt manufactory; where, at my Lord's deſire, who had ſome particular reaſon for requeſting it, I took a ſketch of the building and works, ſo that we did not return to Villeneuve till night. After ſupper

ſupper we chatted a good while over our punch, and went to bed pretty late. It was in this converſation he informed me of the charge intended to be committed to my care, and what meaſures had been taken to bring it about. You may judge of the effect this piece of information had upon me; a converſation of this nature did not incline me to ſleep. It was at length, however, time to retire.

As I entered the chamber appointed for me, I immediately recollected it to be the ſame in which I had formerly ſlept, on my journey to Sion. The view of it made an impreſſion on me, which would be very difficult for me to deſcribe. I was ſtruck with ſuch lively ideas of what I then was, that I imagined myſelf again in the ſame ſituation, tho' ten years of my life had paſſed away in the interval, and all my troubles had been forgotten. But alas! that reflection was but of a ſhort duration, and the next moment oppreſſed me with the weight of my former afflictions. How mortifying were the recollections that ſucceeded to my firſt reverie! what dreadful compariſons ſuggeſted themſelves to my mind! Ye pleaſures of early youth, ye exquiſite delights of a firſt paſſion, O why, ſaid I, doth your remembrance wound a heart already too much oppreſſed with griefs? thrice happy were thoſe days! days now no more, in which I loved and was beloved again; in which I gave myſelf up in peaceful innocence, to the tranſports of a mutual paſſion; in which I drank its intoxicating draughts, and all my faculties were loſt in the rapture, the ecſtaſy, the delirium of love. On the rocks of Meillerie, in the midſt

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of froſt and ſnow, with the frightful precipices before my eyes, was there a being in the creation ſo happy as I? and yet I then wept! I then thought myſelf unfortunate! ſorrow even then ventured to approach my heart! what therefore ſhould I be now, when I have poſſeſſed all that my ſoul held here, and loſt it for ever? I deſerve my misfortune, for having been ſo little ſenſible of my happineſs!——did I weep then? —didſt thou weep? unfortunate wretch! thou ſhalt weep no more—thou haſt no right to weep ——Why is ſhe not dead? ſaid I, in a tranſport of rage; yes, I ſhould then be leſs unhappy: I could then indulge myſelf in my griefs; I ſhould embrace her cold tomb with pleaſure: my affliction ſhould be worthy of her: I might then ſay, She hears my cries, ſhe ſees my tears, ſhe is moved by my groans, ſhe approves and accepts of my homage.——I ſhould then at leaſt have cheriſhed the hope of being united to her again.——But ſhe lives, and is happy in the poſſeſſion of another——She lives, and her life is my death; her happineſs is my torment; and heaven, having taken her from me, deprives me even of the mournful pleaſure of regretting her loſs——She lives, but not for me: ſhe lives for my deſpair, who am an hundred times farther from her than if ſhe were no more.

I went to bed under theſe tormenting reflections; they accompanied me in my ſleep, and diſturbed it with terrible apprehenſions. The moſt poignant afflictions, ſorrow, and death, compoſed my dreams; and all the evils I ever felt repreſented themſelves to my imagination in a thouſand new forms, to torment me over again.

gain. One viſion in particular, and that the moſt cruel of all, ſtill purſued me; and though the confuſed apparitions of various phantoms ſeveral times appeared and vaniſhed, they all ended in the following.

Methought I ſaw the departed mother of your friend on her death-bed, and her daughter on her knees before her, bathed in tears, kiſſing her hands, and receiving her laſt breath. This ſcene, which you once deſcribed to me, and which will never be effaced from my memory, was repreſented in ſtriking colours before me. 'O my dear mother, (ſaid Julia, in accents that chilled my very ſoul,) ſhe who is indebted to you for her life, deprives you of yours! 'Alas! take back what you gave me; for without you it will be only a life of ſorrow.' "My "child, (anſwered her languiſhing mother,) "God is juſt, and his will muſt be obeyed— "you will be a mother in your turn, and"— ſhe could ſay no more.——On this, methought I went forward, to look upon her; but ſhe was vaniſhed, and Julia lay in her place; I ſaw her plainly, and perfectly knew her, though her face was covered with a vail. I gave a ſhriek, and ran to take off the vail; but, methought after many attempts to lay hold of it I could not reach it, but tormented myſelf with vain endeavours to graſp what, though it covered her face, appeared to be inpalpable. Upon which, methought ſhe addreſſed me in a faint voice, and ſaid, 'Friend, be compoſed, the awful vail that 'is ſpread over me, is too ſacred to be remo-'ved.' At theſe words I ſtruggled, made a new effort, and awoke; when I found myſelf in my bed,

bed, harraſſed with fright and fatigue, my face covered with big drops of ſweat, and drowned in tears.

My fears being a little diſſipated, I went to ſleep again; again the ſame dream put me into the ſame agitations: I awoke again, and went to ſleep the third time, when the ſame mournful ſcene ſtill preſented itſelf, the ſame appearance of death, and always the ſame impenetrable vail, eluding my graſp, and hiding from me the dying object which it covered.

On waking from this laſt dream, my terror was ſo great, that I could not overcome it, tho' quite awake. I threw myſelf out of bed, without well knowing what I did, and wandered up and down my chamber, like a child in the dark, imagining myſelf beſet with phantoms, and ſtill fancying in my ears, the ſound of that voice, whoſe plaintive notes I never heard without emotion. The dawn of day, beginning to caſt ſome light upon the objects in my chamber, ſerved only to transform them, agreeable to my troubled imagination. My fright increaſed, and at length entirely deprived me of reaſon. Having with ſome difficulty found the door, I ran out of my room, bolted into that of Lord B——, and, drawing open his curtains, threw myſelf down upon his bed, almoſt breathleſs, crying out, "She is gone—ſhe is gone—I ſhall never ſee her more."——His Lordſhip ſtarted out of his ſleep, and flew to his ſword, imagining himſelf attacked by robbers. But he preſently perceived who it was; and I ſoon after recollected myſelf; this being the ſecond time of my

life that I had appeared before him in ſuch confuſion.

He made me ſit down and compoſe myſelf; and as ſoon as he had learnt the cauſe of my fright, endeavoured to turn it into ridicule; but, ſeeing me too deeply affected with it, and that the impreſſion it had made was not to be eaſily effaced, he changed his tone. "For ſhame, (ſays he with an air of ſeverity,) you neither "deſerve my friendſhip nor eſteem: had I ta-"ken a quarter of the pains with one of my "footmen which I have done with you, I had "made a man of him: but you are fit for nothing." It is indeed, my Lord, (anſwered I,) too true. I had nothing good in me but what came from her, whom now I ſhall ſee no more; and am therefore good for nothing. At this he ſmiled, and embraced me. Come, come, ſays he, endeavour to compoſe yourſelf; to-morrow you will be a reaſonable creature. He then changed the converſation, and propoſed to ſet out. The horſes were accordingly ordered to be put to. In getting into the chaiſe, my Lord whiſpered ſomething to the poſtilion, who immediately drove off.

We travelled for ſome time without ſpeaking. I was ſo taken up with my laſt night's dream, that I heard and ſaw nothing; not even obſerving that the lake, which, the day before, was on my right hand, was now on my left. The rattling of the chaiſe upon the pavement, however, at length awoke me out of my lethargy; I looked up, and to my great ſurpriſe, found we were returned to Clarens. About a furlong from the gate, my Lord ordered us to be ſet down; and

and taking me aſide, "You ſee my deſign, (ſaid he;) it has no need of further explanation: go "thou viſionary mortal, (continued he, preſſing my hand between his,) go and ſee her "again. Happy in expoſing your follies only "to your friends, make haſte, and I will wait "for you here; but be ſure you do not return, "till you have removed that fatal vail which is "woven in your brain."

What could I ſay? I left him without making any anſwer, and, trembling as I advanced, ſlowly approached the houſe. What a part, ſaid I to myſelf, am I going to act here? how dare I ſhew myſelf? what pretext have I for this unexpected return? with what face can I plead my ridiculous terrors, and ſupport the contemptuous looks of the generous Wolmar? In ſhort, the nearer I drew to the houſe, the more childiſh my fears ſeemed to me, and the more contemptible my extravagant behaviour: my mind, however, ſtill miſgave me, and I went on, though every ſtep more ſlowly, till I came juſt to the court-yard; when I heard the door of the elyſium juſt open and ſhut again. Seeing nobody come out, I made a tour round the aviary, keeping as cloſe to it as poſſible; I then liſtened, and could hear you converſing together; but, though I could not diſtinguiſh a word you ſaid, I thought I perceived ſomething in the ſound of your voice ſo languiſhing and tender, that I could not hear it without emotion; and in Julia's a ſweet and affectionate accent, not only ſuch as is uſual to her, but ſo mild and peaceful as to convince me all was well.

This reſtored me to my ſenſes at once, and

woke me in good earneſt from my dream. I immediately perceived myſelf ſo altered, that I laughed at my ridiculous fears; and while I reflected that only a hedge and a few ſhrubs prevented me from ſeeing her alive and in good health, whom I imagined I ſhould never ſee again, I renounced for ever my fearful and chimerical apprehenſions; and determined without more ado, to return without even ſeeing her. You may believe me, Clara, when I proteſt to you that I not only did not ſee her, but went back, proud of not having been ſo weak as to puſh my credulity to the end, and of having at leaſt done ſo much credit to myſelf, as not to have it ſaid of a friend of Lord B——'s, that he could not get the better of a dream.

This, my dear couſin, is what I had to tell you, and is the laſt confeſſion I have to make. The other particulars of our journey are not at all intereſting: let it ſuffice, therefore, to aſſure you, that not only his Lordſhip has been very well ſatisfied with me ſince, but that I am ſtill more ſo with myſelf, who am more ſenſible of my cure than he can be. For fear of giving him any needleſs diſtruſt, I concealed from him my not having actually ſeen you. When he aſked me if the vail was drawn aſide, I anſwered without heſitation in the affirmative; and we have not mentioned it ſince. Yes, couſin, the vail is drawn ſide for ever; that vail which has ſo long hoodwinked my reaſon. All my unruly paſſions are extinguiſhed. I ſee my duty, and reſpect it. You are both dearer to me than ever, but my heart knows no difference between you,

nor

nor feels the leaſt inclination to ſeparate the inſeparables.

We arrived the day before yeſterday at Milan, and the day after to-morrow we ſhall leave it. In about a week we hope to be at Rome, and expect to find letters from you on our arrival. How tedious will ſeem the time before I ſhall ſee thoſe two ſurpriſing perſons who have ſo long troubled the repoſe of the greateſt minds! O Julia! O Clara! no woman that is not equal to you, is worthy of ſuch a man!

LETTER CXLVI.

From Mrs ORBE.

WE all waited with impatience to hear from you, ſo that you will eaſily gueſs how much pleaſure your letters gave our little community; but what you will hardly imagine is, that they ſhould give me leſs than any other perſon in the houſe. They all were pleaſed that you had happily paſſed the Alps; for my part, I had no pleaſure in reflecting that the Alps were between us.

As to the particulars of your return, we have ſaid nothing of them to the baron: beſides, I ſkipped over ſome of your ſoliloquies, in reading your letter in company. Mr Wolmar is ſo ingenuous, as only to laugh at you; but Julia could not recollect the laſt moments of her dying mother, without ſhedding freſh tears. However, this revival of her affliction was all the effect your letter had on her.

With reſpect to myſelf, I will confeſs to you, my dear preceptor, that I am no longer ſurpriſed to ſee you in continual aſtoniſhment at yourſelf; always committing ſome new folly, and always repenting of it: you have long paſſed your life in ſelf-reproach over-night, and in ſelf-applauſe in the morning.

I will freely declare to you, alſo, that the great effort of your courage, in turning back when ſo near us, juſt as wiſe as you came, does not appear to me ſo extraordinary as it may to you. I think I can diſcover more vanity in it, than prudence; and, I believe, upon the whole, I ſhould have liked a little leſs fortitude with more diſcretion. From ſuch a manner of running away, may not one aſk, to what purpoſe you came? You were aſhamed to ſhew yourſelf; and it is of your being afraid to ſhew yourſelf that you ought in fact to be aſhamed; as if the pleaſure of ſeeing your friends were not an ample recompenſe for the pretty chagrin their raillery might give you. Ought you not to have thought yourſelf happy in the opportunity of diverting us with your bewildered looks? As I could not laugh at you then, however, I will laugh at you now; though I loſe half the pleaſure in not ſeeing your confuſion.

Unhappily there is ſomething worſe than all this; which is, that I have caught your fears, without having your means of diſpelling them. That dream of yours has ſomething in it ſo horrible, that I am at once terrified and afflicted with it, in ſpite of all I can do. In reading your letter, I am apt to blame your agitation; after I have read it, I blame your ſecurity. It

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is impoſſible to ſee a ſufficient reaſon for your being ſo much affected, and at the ſame time for your becoming tranquil. It is very ſtrange, that your fearful apprehenſions ſhould prevail till the very moment in which you might have been ſatisfied, and that you ſhould ſtop there. Another ſtep, a motion, a word, had done the buſineſs. You were alarmed without reaſon, and compoſed again without cauſe: but you have infected me with a terror which you no longer feel; and it appears, that if you have given an inſtance once in your life of your fortitude, it has been at my expence. Since the receipt of your fatal letter, my heart is conſtantly oppreſſed. I cannot approach Julia, without trembling at the thoughts of loſing her. I think every now and then I ſee a deadly paleneſs overſpread her countenance; and this morning, as I embraced her, tears burſt involuntarily from me, and poured down my cheeks. O, that vail! that vail!——There is ſomething ſo prophetic in it, that it troubles me every time I think of it. No, I cannot forgive you for not removing it, when you had it in your power; and fear I ſhall never have a moment's peace of mind till I ſee you again in company with her. You muſt own, that, after having talked ſo long of philoſophy, you have here given a very unſeaſonable proof of yours. Ah! dream again, and come and ſee your friends; it were better for you to do this and be a *viſionary mortal*, than to run away from them and be a philoſopher.

It appears by a letter of Lord B———'s to Mr Wolmar, that he thinks ſeriouſly of coming to ſettle with us. As ſoon as he is determined, and

and his heart has made its choice, may you both return ſtedfaſt and happy! This is the conſtant prayer of our little community, and above all that of your friend,

CLARA ORBE.

P. S. If you really heard nothing of our converſation in the elyſium, it is perhaps ſo much the better for you; for you know me to be vigilant enough to ſee ſome people without their ſeeing me, and ſevere enough to mortify liſteners.

LETTER CXLVII.

From Mr WOLMAR.

AS I write to Lord B——, and explain myſelf ſo fully with reſpect to you, I have hardly any thing more to ſay at preſent than to refer you to his letter. Yours would perhaps require of me a return of civilities; but theſe I had rather make in actions than in words. To make you one of my family, to treat you as my brother, my friend; to make her you loved your ſiſter; to put into your hands a paternal authority over my children; to inveſt you with my privileges, after having robbed you of yours; theſe are the compliments I have to make you. If, on your part, you juſtify my conduct, it will be ſufficient praiſe. I have endeavoured to honour you with my eſteem; it is yours to honour me by your merit. Let no other encomiums paſs between us.

So

So far am I from being ſurpriſed at ſeeing you affected with a dream, that I ſee no very good reaſon for your reproaching yourſelf for being ſo. One dream more or leſs ſeems to be of no importance in ſuch ſyſtematical gentlemen as yourſelf, whoſe very principles are ſo viſionary. But what I reproach you for, is leſs the effect of your dream, than the ſpecies of it; and that for a reaſon very different, perhaps, from what you may imagine. A certain tyrant once condemned a man to death for dreaming that he had ſtabbed him. Recollect the reaſon he gave for that ſentence, and make the application. What! you are going to determine the fate of your friend, and you are thinking of your old amours! Had it not been for the converſation of the preceding evening, I ſhould never forgive you that dream. Think in the day-time of what you are going to do at Rome, and you will dream leſs at night of what is doing at Vevay.

The little French-woman is ſick, which keeps Mrs Wolmar ſo conſtantly employed that ſhe has not time to write to you. Somebody, however, will willingly take upon themſelves that agreeable taſk. Happy youth! to whoſe happineſs every thing conſpires! the rewards of virtue all await your merit. As to that of my good-will, trouble no one with it; it is from you only I expect the recompenſe.

LETTER CXLVIII.

To Mr WOLMAR.

THIS letter muſt be kept to ourſelves. Let the

the errors of the beſt of men be for ever buried in profound ſecrecy. In what a dangerous taſk have I engaged! O my wiſe and generous friend! why do I not retain your counſel in my memory, as I do your benevolence at my heart! never did I before ſtand in more need of your prudence, nor did ever the apprehenſions of falling ſhort of it ſo much embarraſs the little I have. Ah! what is become of your paternal advice, your inſtruction, your knowledge? what will become of me without you? Yes, in this critical moment, I would give up every flattering proſpect in life to have you here but for one week.

I have been deceived in all my conjectures: I have as yet done nothing but blunder. I was afraid only of the marchioneſs. After having ſeen her, and been ſtruck with admiration at her beauty and addreſs, I applied myſelf, with all my might, to wean the affections of her noble lover from ſo attracting an object. Charmed with the thoughts of bringing him over to the ſide where I thought there was no danger, I launched out in the praiſe of Laura, and ſpoke of her with the eſteem and admiration with which ſhe had inſpired me: in weakening his ſtronger attachment for her rival, I hoped, by degrees, entirely to deſtroy both.

He readily gave into my deſign; and exceeding even the bounds of complaiſance, perhaps to puniſh my importunities, by alarming me on the other ſide, he affected a much greater warmth of paſſion for Laura than he really felt. But what ſhall I ſay to him now? the ardour of his paſſion remains without any affectation. His heart, exhauſted by ſo many trials, was left

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in a ſtate of weakneſs, of which ſhe has taken the advantage. It would be difficult indeed for any man long to affect a paſſion for her which he did not feel. In fact, it is impoſſible to look upon this lovely unfortunate, without being ſtruck by her air and figure; a certain caſt of languor and depreſſion, which conſtantly ſhades her charming features, in damping the vivacity of her looks, renders them but the more affecting; even as the ſun darts its rays through the paſſing clouds, ſo her eyes caſt the more piercing looks through the clouds of grief that obſcure their luſtre. Her very dejection has all the grace of modeſty; in ſeeing, one pities her; in hearing, one reſpects her. In ſhort, I can avow, in juſtification of my friend, that I know only two men in the world, who could ſee and converſe with her without danger.

Oh Wolmar! he is loſt to reaſon. I ſee, and feel it; I own it to you with bitterneſs of heart. I tremble to think how far his extravagant paſſion may make him forget himſelf and his duty. I tremble leſt that intrepid love of virtue, which makes him deſpiſe the opinion of the world, ſhould hurry him into the other extreme, and lead him to treſpaſs even the ſacred laws of decorum and decency. Shall my Lord B— contract ſuch a marriage?—can you think it—under the eye of his friend too! who ſees, who ſuffers it!—and who lies under infinite obligations to him!—No, his hand, ere it be thus abuſed, ſhall rip open my breaſt, and tear my heart out.

But what ſhall I do? how ſhall I behave myſelf? you know his impetuoſity of temper. Argument

gument will avail nothing; and his diſcourſe of late, has only increaſed my apprehenſions for him. At firſt, I affected not to underſtand him, and reaſoned indirectly in general maxims; he, in turn, affected not to underſtand me. If I endeavoured to touch him a little more to the quick, he anſwers ſententiouſly, and imagines he has refuted me. If I reply and enforce my argument, he flies into a paſſion, and talks in a manner ſo unfriendly, that a real friend knows not how to anſwer him. You may believe, that, on this occaſion, I am neither timid nor baſhful; when we are doing our duty, we are too apt to be proud and tenacious; but pride has nothing to do here; it is neceſſary I ſhould ſucceed; and unſucceſsful attempts will only prejudiſe better means. I hardly dare enter with him into any argument; for I every day experience the truth of what you told me, that he is a better reaſoner than I, and that the way to win him to my party is not to irritate him by diſpute.

Beſides, he looks a little cold upon me at preſent. Appearances would make one apt to think he is uneaſy at my importunity. How this weakneſs debaſes a man in ſo many reſpects ſuperior to the reſt of mankind! the great, the ſublime Lord B—, ſtands in awe of his friend, his creature, his pupil! It even ſeems, by ſome words he has let fall concerning the choice of his reſidence if he does not marry, that he has a mind to try my fidelity by oppoſing it to my intereſt. He well knows I ought not, neither can I leave him. O Wolmar, I will indeed do my duty, and follow my benefactor. If I were

baſe

baſe and mean, what ſhould I gain by my perfidy? Julia and her generous huſband would not truſt the education of their children to a betrayer of his friend.

You have often told me, that the inferior paſſions are not eaſily turned from their purſuit; but that the ſuperior ones may be armed againſt themſelves. I imagined, I might be able to make uſe of that maxim in the preſent caſe. In fact, the motives of compaſſion, of a contempt for the prejudices of the world, of habit, of every thing that determines my Lord B—— on this occaſion, are of that inferior nature, and elude all my attacks: whereas true love is inſeparable from generoſity, and by that one always has ſome hold of him. I have attempted that indirect method, and deſpair not of ſucceſs. It may ſeem cruel; and, to ſay truth, I have not done it without ſome repugnance. Nevertheleſs, all circumſtances conſidered, I conceive I am doing ſervice even to Laura herſelf. What would ſhe do in the rank to which ſhe might be raiſed by marriage, but expoſe her former ignominy? but, how great may ſhe not be in remaining what ſhe is! if I know any thing of that extraordinary young lady, ſhe is better formed to enjoy the ſacrifice ſhe has made, than the rank ſhe ought to refuſe.

If this reſource fails me, there remains one more in the magiſtracy, on account of their difference of religion; but this method ſhall not be taken, till I am reduced to the laſt extremity, and have tried every other in vain. Whatever may happen, I ſhall ſpare nothing to prevent ſo unworthy and diſgraceful an al-

liance. Believe me, my honoured Wolmar, I ſhall be tenacious of your eſteem to the lateſt hour of my life; and whatever my Lord may write to you, whatever you may have ſaid, depend on it, coſt what it will, while this heart beats within my breaſt, Lauretta Piſana ſhall not be lady B——.

If you approve of my meaſures, this letter needs no anſwer; if you think me in any wiſe miſtaken, favour me with your inſtructions. But be expeditious, for there is not a moment to loſe. I ſhall have my letter directed by a ſtrange hand: do the ſame by your anſwer. After having read what I have written, pleaſe to burn my letter, and be ſilent as to its contents. This is the firſt and the only ſecret I ever deſired you to conceal from my two couſins: and if I had dared to confide more in my own judgment, you yourſelf ſhould have remained ignorant of the affair *.

LETTER CXLIX.

Mrs WOLMAR *to Mrs* ORBE.

THE courier from Italy ſeemed only to wait your departure, for his own arrival; as if to

* For the better underſtanding this and Letter CLIII. the reader ſhould have been made acquainted with the adventures of Lord B—, which at firſt I had indeed ſome notion of inſerting in this collection. But, on ſecond thoughts, I could not reſolve to ſpoil the ſimplicity of this hiſtory of the two lovers, with the extravagance of his. It is better to leave ſomething to the reader's imagination.

to puniſh you for having ſtaid only for him. Not that I myſelf made the pretty diſcovery of the cauſe of your loitering: it was my huſband who obſerved, that after the horſes had been put to at eight o'clock, you deferred your departure till eleven; not out of regard to us, but for a reaſon eaſy to be gueſſed at, from your aſking twenty times, if it was ten o'clock, becauſe the poſt generally goes by at that time.

You are caught, my dear couſin; you cannot deny it. In ſpite of the prophetic Chaillot, her Clara, ſo wild, or rather ſo diſcreet, has not been ſo to the end. You are caught in the ſame toils from which you took ſo much pains to extricate your friend, and have not been able to preſerve that liberty yourſelf, to which you reſtored me. It is my turn to laugh now. Ah, my dear friend, one ought to have your talents to know how to laugh like you, and give even to raillery the affecting turn and appearance of kindneſs. Beſides, what a difference in our ſituation! with what face can I divert myſelf with an evil of which I am the cauſe, and from which you have taken upon yourſelf to free me. There is not a ſentiment in your breaſt that does not awake a ſenſe of gratitude in mine; even your weakneſs being in you the effect of virtue. It is this which conſoles and diverts me. My errors are to be lamented; but one may laugh at the falſe modeſty which makes you bluſh at a paſſion as pure as yourſelf.

But, let us return to your Italian courier, and leave moralizing for a while. This courier then, who has been ſo long in coming, you will aſk what he has brought us. Nothing but good

news of our friends, and a large packet for you. Oho! I ſee you ſmile and take breath now. As the letter is ſent you, however, you will doubtleſs wait patiently to know what it contains. It may yet nevertheleſs be of ſome eſtimation, even though it did not come when expected; for it breathes ſuch a tender——but I will only write news to you, and I dare ſay what I was going to ſay is none.

With that letter is come another from Lord B——, to my huſband, with a great many compliments alſo for us. This contains ſome real news, which is ſo much the more unexpected, as the firſt was ſilent on the ſubject. Our friends at Rome were to ſet out the next day for Naples, where Lord B—— has ſome buſineſs; and from whence they are to go to ſee mount Veſuvius——can you conceive, my dear, that ſuch a ſight can be entertaining? But on their return to Rome, think, Clara, gueſs what may happen.—Lord B— is on the point of being married——not, I thank heaven, to that unworthy marchioneſs; he tells us, on the contrary, that ſhe is much indiſpoſed. To whom then?———To Laura, the amiable Laura, who ——yet, what a marriage! our friend ſays not a word about it. Immediately after the marriage, they will all three ſet out and come thither, to take their future meaſures. What they are to be my huſband, has not told me; but he expects that St Preux will ſtay with us.

I muſt confeſs to you his ſilence gives me ſome little uneaſineſs; I cannot ſee clearly through it. I think I ſee an odd peculiarity of circumſtances, and conteſts of human paſſions abſo-

abſolutely unintelligible. I cannot ſee how ſo good a man ſhould contract ſo laſting an affection for ſo bad a woman as the marchioneſs; or indeed, how ſhe herſelf, being of ſuch a violent and cruel temper, could entertain ſo ardent a love, if one may ſo call her guilty paſſion, for a man of ſo different a diſpoſition. Neither can I imagine, how a young creature, ſo generous, affectionate and diſintereſted as Laura, could be able to ſupport her firſt diſſoluteneſs of manners; how that flattering and deceitful tenderneſs of heart, which miſleads our ſex, ſhould recover her; how love, which is the ruin of ſo many modeſt women, ſhould make her chaſte.

Will lady B—— then come hither? hither, my dear Clara! what do you think of it? After all, what a prodigy muſt that aſtoniſhing woman be, who, ruined by a diſſolute and abandoned education, was reclaimed by her tenderneſs of heart, and whom love hath conducted to virtue! Ought any one to admire her more than I, who have acted quite contrary; who was led aſtray by inclination, when every thing elſe conſpired to conduct me in the paths of virtue. I ſunk not ſo low, it is true; but have I raiſed myſelf like her? have I avoided ſo many ſnares, and made ſuch ſacrifices as ſhe has made? From the loweſt ignominy ſhe has riſen to the higheſt degree of honour, and is a thouſand times more reſpectable than if ſhe had never fallen. She has ſenſe and virtue: what needs ſhe more to reſemble us? If it be poſſible for a woman to repair the errors of her youth, what right have I to more indulgence than ſhe? with whom can I

hope to ſtand excuſed, and to what reſpect can I pretend, if I refuſe to reſpect her?

And yet, though my reaſon tells me this, my heart ſpeaks againſt it; and, without being able to tell why, I cannot think it right that Lord B—— ſhould contract ſuch a marriage, and that his friend ſhould be concerned in the affair. Such is the force of prejudice! ſo difficult is it to ſhake off the yoke of public opinion! which, nevertheleſs, generally induces us to be unjuſt: the paſt good is effaced by the preſent evil; but, is the paſt evil ever effaced by any preſent good?

I communicated to my huſband my uneaſineſs as to the conduct of St Preux in this affair. He ſeems, ſaid I, to be aſhamed to ſpeak of it to my couſin; I know he is incapable of baſeneſs, but he is too eaſy, and may have too much indulgence for the foibles of a friend.—No, anſwered he, he has done what he ought, and I know will continue to do ſo; this is all I am at liberty to tell you at preſent of the matter; but St Preux is honeſt, and I will engage for him, you will be ſatisfied with his conduct.——It is impoſſible, Clara, that Wolmar can deceive me, or St Preux him. So poſitive an aſſurance therefore fully ſatisfied me; and made me ſuſpect my ſcruples to be the effect of a falſe delicacy, and that if I was leſs vain and more equitable, I ſhould find Laura more deſerving the rank of lady B—.

But let us take leave of her for the preſent, and return to ourſelves. Do not you perceive too well, in reading this letter, that our friends are likely to return ſooner than we expected? and is not your heart a little affected by it? Does

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it not flutter, and beat quicker than ordinary; that heart too ſuſceptible, and too nearly akin to mine? Is it not apprehenſive of the danger of living familiarly with a beloved object? to ſee him every day? to ſleep under the ſame roof? and if my errors did not leſſen me in your eſteem, does not my example give you reaſon to fear for yourſelf? In your younger years, how many apprehenſions for my ſafety did not your good ſenſe and friendſhip ſuggeſt, which a blind paſſion made me deſpiſe! It is now, my dear friend, my turn to be apprehenſive for you; and I have the better claim to your regard, as what I have to offer is founded on ſad experience. Attend to me then, ere it be too late; leſt, having paſſed half your life in lamenting my errors, you ſhould paſs the other in lamenting your own.

Above all things, place not too great a confidence in your gaiety of temper, which, though it may be a ſecurity to thoſe who have nothing to fear, generally betrays thoſe who are in real danger. You, my dear Clara, once laughed at love; but that was becauſe you were a ſtranger to the paſſion, and not having felt its power, you thought yourſelf above its attacks. Love is avenged, and in its turn laughs at you. Learn to diſtruſt its deceitful mirth, leſt it ſhould one day coſt you an equal portion of grief. My dear friend, it is time to lay you open to yourſelf; for hitherto you have not taken that intereſting view: you are miſtaken in your own character, and know not how to ſet a juſt value upon yourſelf. You confide in the opinion of Chaillot; who, becauſe of your vivacity of diſpoſition, judged you to be little ſuſceptible of heart; but a heart

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like yours was beyond her talents to penetrate. Chaillot was incapable of knowing you, nor does any perſon in the world know you truly but myſelf. I have left you in your miſtake ſo long as it could be of ſervice to you; but now that it may be hurtful, it is neceſſary to remove it.

You are lively, and imagine yourſelf to have but little ſenſibility. Ah, my dear, how much are you deceived! your vivacity itſelf proves the contrary. Is it not always on ſentimental ſubjects that it is exerted? does not even your pleaſantry come from the heart? your raillery is a greater proof of your affection, than the compliments of others; you ſmile, but your ſmiles penetrate our ſouls; you laugh, but your laughter draws from us the tears of tenderneſs; and I obſerve you always ſerious among thoſe who are indifferent to you.

Were you really no other than you pretend to be, tell me, what motive could have forcibly united us? where had been thoſe bonds of unparalleled friendſhip that now ſubſiſt between us? by what miracle ſhould ſuch an attachment give the preference to a heart ſo little capable of it? Can ſhe who lived but for her friend, be incapable of love? ſhe who would have left father, huſband, relations, and country, to have followed her? What have I done in compariſon of this! I who have confeſſedly a ſuſceptible heart, and permitted myſelf to love; yet, with all my ſenſibility, have hardly been able to return your friendſhip!

Theſe contradictions have inſtilled into your head as whimſical an idea of your own character as ſuch a giddy brain can conceive; which

is,

is, to believe yourſelf at once the warmeſt friend and the coldeſt lover. Incapable of diſowning theſe gentle ties with which you perceived you were bound, you thought yourſelf incapable of being fettered by any other. You thought nothing in the world but your Julia could affect you; as if thoſe hearts which are by nature ſuſceptible, could be affected but by one object, and as if, becauſe you loved no other than me, I could be the proper object of your affection. You pleaſantly aſked me once, if the ſoul was of any ſex. No, my dear, the ſoul is of no ſex; but its affections make that diſtinction, and you begin to be too ſenſible of it. Becauſe the firſt lover that offered himſelf did not affect you, you immediately concluded no other could; becauſe you was not leſs in love with your ſuitor, you concluded you could never be in love with any one. When he became your huſband, however, you loved him, and with ſo ardent an affection that it injured even the intimacy with your friend: that heart, ſo little ſuſceptible, as you pretend, could annex to love as tender a ſupplement to ſatisfy the fond deſires of a worthy man.

Ah, my poor couſin! it is your taſk for the future to reſolve your own doubts; and if it be true,

Ch'un freddo amante è mal ſicuro amico,

That a cold lover is a faithleſs friend,

I am greatly afraid I have at preſent one reaſon more than ever I had to rely upon you.

But to go on with what I had to ſay to you

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on this ſubject. I ſuſpect that you were in love much ſooner than you perhaps imagine; or at leaſt that the ſame inclination which ruined me would have ſeduced you, had I not been firſt caught in the ſnare. Can you conceive a ſentiment ſo natural and agreeable, could be ſo ſlow in its birth? Can you conceive, that, at our age we could either of us live in a familiarity with an amiable young man without danger, or that the conformity ſo general in our taſte and inclination ſhould not extend to this particular? No, my dear, you, I am certain, would have loved him, if I had not loved him firſt. Leſs weak, though not leſs ſuſceptible, you might have been more prudent than I, without being more happy. But what inclination would have prevailed on your generous mind, over the horror you would have felt at the infidelity of betraying your friend? It was our friendſhip that ſaved you from the ſnares of love: you reſpected my lover with the ſame friendſhip, and thus redeemed your heart at the expence of mine.

Nor are theſe conjectures ſo void of foundation as you may imagine; nor, if I had a mind to recollect thoſe times which I could wiſh to forget, would it be difficult for me to trace even in the care you imagined you took only in my concerns, a farther care, ſtill more intereſting, in thoſe of the object of my affection. Not daring to love him yourſelf, you encouraged me to do it: you thought each of us neceſſary to the happineſs of the other; and therefore, that heart, which has not its equal in the world, loved us both the more tenderly. Be aſſured, that had it not been for your own weakneſs, you would not

have been ſo indulgent to me: but you would have reproached yourſelf for a juſt ſeverity towards me, with an imputation of jealouſy. You were conſcious of having no right to contend with a paſſion in me, which ought nevertheleſs to have been ſubdued; and, being more fearful of betraying your friend than of not acting diſcreetly, you thought, in offering up your own happineſs to ours, you had made a ſufficient ſacrifice to virtue.

This, my dear Clara, is your hiſtory; thus hath your deſpotic friendſhip laid me under the neceſſity of being obliged to you for my ſhame, and of thanking you for my errors. Think not, however, that I would imitate you in this. I am no more diſpoſed to follow your example than you mine; and as you have no reaſon to fear falling into my errors, I have no longer, thank heaven! the ſame reaſons for granting you indulgence. What better uſe can I make of that virtue to which you reſtored me, than to make it inſtrumental in the preſervation of yours?

Let me therefore give you my farther advice on the preſent occaſion. The long abſence of our preceptor has not leſſened your regard for him. Your being left again at liberty, and his return, have given riſe to opportunity, which love hath been ingenuous enough to improve. It is not a new ſentiment produced in your heart; it is only one which, long concealed there, has at length ſeized this occaſion to diſcover itſelf. Proud enough to avow it to yourſelf, you are perhaps impatient to confeſs it to me. That confeſſion might ſeem to you almoſt

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neceſſary to make it quite innocent: in becoming a crime in your friend, it ceaſed to be one in you; and perhaps you only gave yourſelf up to the paſſion you ſo many years contended with, the more effectually to accompliſh your friend's cure.

I perceived all this, my dear; and was little alarmed at a paſſion which I ſaw would be my own protection, and on account of which you have nothing to reproach yourſelf. The winter we paſſed together in peace and friendſhip, gave me yet more hopes of you; for I ſaw, that, ſo far from loſing your vivacity, you ſeemed to have improved it. I frequently obſerved you affectionate, earneſt, attentive; but frank in your profeſſions, ingenuous even in your raillery, always unreſerved and open, and, in your livelieſt ſallies, the picture of innocence.

But ſince our converſation in the *elyſium*, I have ſomewhat leſs reaſon to be ſatisfied with you. I find you frequently ſad and penſive. You take as much pleaſure in being alone as with your friend; you have not changed your language, but your accent; you are more cautious in your pleaſantry; you do not mention him ſo often; one would think you were in conſtant fear leſt he ſhould overhear you; and it is eaſy to ſee by your inquietude, that you want to hear from him much oftener than you confeſs.

I tremble, my good couſin, leſt you ſhould not be ſenſible of the worſt of your diſorder, and that the ſhaft has pierced deeper than you ſeem to be aware of. Probe your heart, my dear, to the bottom; and then tell me, again I repeat it,

it, tell me if the moſt prudent woman does not run a riſque by being long in the company of a beloved object; tell me if the confidence which ruined me can be entirely harmleſs to you? you are both at liberty; this is the very circumſtance that makes opportunity dangerous. In a mind truly virtuous, there is no weakneſs will get the better of conſcience; and I agree with you, that one has always fortitude enough to avoid committing a wilful crime: but, alas! what is a conſtant protection againſt human weakneſs? Reflect, however, on conſequences; think on the effects of ſhame. We muſt pay a due reſpect to ourſelves, if we expect to receive it from others; for how can we flatter ourſelves, that others will pay to us what we have not for ourſelves? or where can we think ſhe will ſtop in the career of vice, who ſets out without fear? Theſe arguments I ſhould uſe even to women who pay no regard to religion and morality, and have no rule of conduct but the opinion of others; but with you, whoſe principles are thoſe of virtue and Chriſtianity, who ſee and love your duty, who know and follow other rules than thoſe of public opinion, your firſt and moſt important honour is to ſtand excuſed by your own conſcience.

Would you know where you are wrong in this whole affair? It is, I ſay again, in being aſhamed of entertaining a ſentiment which you have only to declare, to render it perfectly innocent: but with all your vivacity, no creature in the world is more timid. You affect pleaſantry only to ſhew your courage, your poor heart trembling all the while for fear. In pre-

tending to ridicule your paſſion, you do exactly like the children, who ſing in the dark becauſe they are afraid. O my dear friend, reflect on what you yourſelf has often ſaid: it is a falſe ſhame which leads to real diſgrace, and virtue never bluſhes at any thing but what is criminal. Is love in itſelf a crime? does it not on the contrary conſiſt of the moſt refined as well as the moſt pleaſing of all inclinations; is not its end laudable and virtuous? does it ever enter into baſe and vulgar minds? does it not animate only the great and noble? does it not ennoble their ſentiments? does it not in a manner double their being? does it not raiſe them above themſelves? Alas! if to be prudent and virtuous we muſt be inſenſible to love, among whom could virtue find its votaries on earth? among the refuſe of nature and the dregs of mankind.

Why then do you reproach yourſelf? Have you not made choice of a worthy man? is he not diſengaged? are not you ſo too? does he not deſerve all your eſteem? has he not the greateſt regard for you? will you not be even too happy in conferring happineſs on a friend ſo worthy of that name; paying, with your hand and heart the debts long ago contracted by your friend; and in doing him honour by raiſing him to yourſelf, as a reward to unſucceſsful merit.

I ſee what petty ſcruples ſtill lie in your way. The receding from a declared reſolution, by taking a ſecond huſband; the expoſing your weakneſs to the world; the marrying a needy adventurer; for low minds, always laviſh of ſcandal, will doubtleſs ſo call him. Theſe are the reaſons

ſons which make you rather aſhamed of your paſſion, than willing to juſtify it; that make you deſirous of ſtifling it in your boſom, rather than render it legitimate. But pray does the ſhame lie in marrying the man one loves, or in loving without marrying him? between theſe lies your choice. The regard you owe to the deceaſed requires you ſhould reſpect his widow ſo much, as rather to give her a huſband than a gallant: and, if your youth obliges you to make choice of one to ſupply his place, is it not paying a further regard to his memory, to fix that choice upon the man he moſt eſteemed when living?

With reſpect to his inferiority in point of fortune, I ſhall perhaps only offend you in replying to ſo frivolous an objection, when it is oppoſed to good ſenſe and virtue. I know of no debaſing inequality, but that which ariſes either from character or education. To whatever rank a man of a mean diſpoſition and low principle may riſe, an alliance with him will always be ſcandalous. But a man educated in the ſentiments of virtue and honour is equal to any other in the world, and may take place in whatever rank he pleaſes. You know what were the ſentiments of your father, when your friend was propoſed for me: "His family is reputable, "though obſcure; he is every-where deſervedly eſteemed." With all this, was he the loweſt of mankind, he would deſerve your conſideration: for it is ſurely better to derogate from nobility than virtue; and the wife of a mechanic is more reputable than the miſtreſs of a prince.

I have a glimpſe of another kind of embarraſsment, in the neceſſity you lie under of making the firſt declaration: for, before he preſumes to aſpire to you, it is neceſſary you ſhould give him permiſſion; this is one of the circumſtances juſtly attending an inequality of rank, which often obliges the ſuperior to make the moſt mortifying advances. As to this difficulty I can eaſily forgive you; and even confeſs it would appear to me of real conſequence, if I could not find out a method to remove it. I hope you depend ſo far on me, as to believe this may be brought about without your being ſeen in it; and on my part, I depend ſo much on my meaſures, that I ſhall undertake it with aſſurance of ſucceſs: for notwithſtanding what you both formerly told me of the difficulty of converting a friend into a lover, if I can read that heart which I too long ſtudied, I do not believe that on this occaſion any great art will be neceſſary. I propoſe, therefore, to charge myſelf with this negociation, to the end that you may indulge yourſelf in the pleaſure of his return, without reſerve, regret, danger, or ſcandal. Ah, my dear couſin! how delighted ſhall I be to unite for ever two hearts ſo well formed for each other, and which have been long united in mine. May they ſtill (if poſſible) be more cloſely united! may we have but one heart amongſt us! Yes, Clara, you will ſerve your friend by indulging your love; and I ſhall be more certain of my own ſentiments, when I ſhall no longer make a diſtinction between him and you.

But if, notwithſtanding what I have alledged, you will not give into this project, my advice

is,

is, at all events, to banish this dangerous man; always to be dreaded by one or the other; for, be it as it may, the education of our children is ſtill leſs important to us than the virtue of their mothers. I leave you to reflect during your journey on what I have written; we will talk further about it on your return.

I ſend this letter directly to Geneva; leſt, as you were to lie but one night at Lauſanne, it ſhould not find you there. Pray, bring me a good account of that little republic. From the agreeable deſcription, I ſhould think you happy in the opportunity of ſeeing it, if I could ſet any ſtore by pleaſures purchaſed with the abſence of my friends. I never loved grandeur, and at preſent I hate it for having deprived me of ſo many years of your company. Neither you nor I, my dear, went to buy our wedding-cloaths at Geneva; and yet, however deſerving your brother may be, I much doubt whether your ſiſter-in-law will be more happy, with her Flanders-lace and India ſilks, than we in our native ſimplicity. I charge you, however, notwithſtanding my ill-natured reflections, to engage them to celebrate their nuptials at Clarens. My father hath written to yours, and my huſband to the bride's mother, to invite them hither. Their letters you will find incloſed: pleaſe to deliver them, and enforce their invitations with your intereſt. This is all I could do, in order to be preſent at the ceremony; for I declare to you, I would not upon any account leave my family. Adieu. Let me have a line from you, at leaſt to let me know when I am to expect you here. It is now the ſecond day ſince you left me, and

I know not how I ſhall ſupport two days more without you.

P. S. While I was writing this letter, Miſs Harriot truly muſt give herſelf the air of writing to her mamma too. As I always like children ſhould write their own thoughts, and not thoſe which are dictated to them, I indulged her curioſity; and let her write juſt what ſhe pleaſed without altering a word. This makes the third letter incloſed. I doubt, however, whether this is what you will look for in caſting your eye over the contents of the packet. But, for the other letter you need not look long, as you will not find it. It is directed to you at Clarens; and at Clarens only it ought to be read: ſo take your meaſures accordingly.

LETTER CL.

HARRIOT *to her Mother.*

WHERE are you then, mamma? They ſay you are at Geneva; which is ſuch a long, long way off, that one muſt ride two days, all day long, to reach you: ſurely, mamma, you do not intend to go round the world? My little pappa is ſet out this morning for Etange; my little grand-pappa is gone a-hunting; my little mamma is gone into her cloſet to write; and there is nobody with me but Parnette and the French-woman. Indeed, mamma, I do not know

how

how it is; but, ſince our good friend has left us, we are all ſcattered about ſtrangely. You began firſt, mamma; you ſoon began to be tired, when you had nobody left to teaſe: but what is much worſe ſince you are gone, is, that my little mamma is not ſo good-humoured as when you were here. My little boy is very well, but he does not love you, becauſe you did not dance him yeſterday as you uſed to do. As for me, I believe I ſhould love you a little bit ſtill, if you would return quickly, that one might not be ſo dull. But, if you would make it up with me quite, you muſt bring my little boy ſomething that would pleaſe him. To quiet him indeed, would not be very eaſy; you would be puzzled to know what to do with him. O that our good friend was but here now! for it is as he ſaid, my fine fan is broke to pieces, my blue ſkirt is torn all to bits, my white frock is in tatters; my mittins are not worth a farthing. Fare you well, mamma: I muſt here end my letter; for my little mamma has finiſhed her's, and is coming out of her cloſet. I think her eyes are red, but I durſt not ſay ſo: in reading this, however, ſhe will ſee I obſerved it. My good mamma, you are certainly very naughty, to make my little mamma cry.

P. S. Give my love to my grand-pappa, to my uncles, to my new aunt and her mamma, and to every body: tell them I would kiſs them all, and you too, mamma; but that you are all ſo far off, I cannot reach you.

LET-

LETTER CLI.

Mrs ORBE *to Mrs* WOLMAR.

BEFORE leaving Lauſanne, I cannot but drop you a line to acquaint you of my ſafe arrival here, though not ſo chearfully diſpoſed indeed as I could wiſh. I promiſed myſelf much pleaſure in a journey which you have been ſo often tempted to take; but, in refuſing to accompany me, you have made it almoſt diſagreeable. And how ſhould it be otherwiſe? when it is troubleſome, I have all the trouble to myſelf; and when it is tolerably agreeable, I regret your not being with me to partake of the pleaſure. I had nothing to ſay, it is true, againſt your reaſons for ſtaying at home; but do you think I was therefore ſatisfied with them? Indeed, my good couſin, if you do, you are miſtaken; for the very reaſon why I am diſſatisfied is, that I have no right to be ſo. I wonder you are not aſhamed of yourſelf, to have always the beſt of the argument, and to prevent your friend from having what ſhe likes, without leaving her one good reaſon to find fault with you. All had gone to rack and ruin, no doubt, had you left your huſband, your family, and your little marmottes in the lurch for one week; it had been a wild ſcheme, to be ſure; but I ſhould have liked you a hundred times the better for it: whereas, in aiming to be all perfection, you are good for nothing at all, and are only fit to keep company with angels.

Notwithſtanding our paſt diſagreement, I could

could not help being moved at the ſight of my friends and relations; who, on their part, received me with pleaſure, or at leaſt with a profuſion of civilities. I can give you no account of my brother, till I am better acquainted with him. With a tolerable figure, he has a good deal of the formal air of the country he comes from. He is ſerious, cold, and I think has a ſurly haughtineſs in his diſpoſition, which makes me apprehenſive for his wife, that he will not prove ſo tractable a huſband as ours, but will take upon him a good deal of the lord and maſter.

My father was ſo delighted to ſee me, that he even left unfiniſhed the peruſal of an account of a great battle which the French, as if to verify the prediction of our friend, have lately gained in Flanders. Thank heaven, he was not there! Can you conceive the intrepid Lord B—— would ſtand to ſee his countrymen run away, or that he would have joined them in their flight? No, never; he would ſooner have ruſhed on death a thouſand times.

But, a-propos, of our friend,—our other friend hath not written for ſome time. Was not yeſterday the day for the courier to come from Italy? If you receive any letters, I hope you will not forget I am a party concerned in the news.

Adieu, my dear couſin; I muſt ſet out. I ſhall expect your letters at Geneva; where we hope to arrive to-morrow by dinner-time. As for the reſt, you may be aſſured, that, by ſome means or other, you ſhall be at the wedding; and that, if you abſolutely will not come to Lauſanne, I will come with my whole company

to

to plunder Clarens, and drink up all the wine that is to be found in the town.

LETTER CLII.

Mrs ORBE *to Mrs* WOLMAR.

ADMIRABLY lectured, my dear! you keep it up to a miracle! you ſeem to depend, however, too much on the ſalutary effect of your ſermons. Without pretending to judge whether they would formerly have lulled your preceptor to ſleep, I can aſſure you they do not put me to ſleep at preſent; on the contrary, that which you ſent me yeſterday was ſo far from affecting me with drowſineſs, that it kept me awake all night. I bar, however, the remarks of that Argus your huſband, if he ſhould ſee the letter. But I will write in ſome order, and I proteſt to you, you had better burn your fingers than ſhew it him.

Were I to be very methodical, and recapitulate with you article for article, I ſhould uſurp your privilege; I had better, therefore, ſet them down as they come into my head; to affect a little modeſty alſo, and not give you too much fair play, I will not begin with our travellers, or the courier from Italy. At the worſt, if it ſhould ſo happen, I ſhall only have my letter to write over again, and to reverſe it, by putting the beginning at the latter end. I am determined, however, to begin with the ſuppoſed Lady B—.

I declare I am offended at the very title; and ſhall

ſhall I ever forgive St Preux for permitting her to take it, Lord B— for conferring it on her, or you for acknowledging it. Shall Julia Wolmar receive Lauretta Piſana into her houſe! permit her to live with her!—think of it again, child. Would not ſuch a condeſcenſion in you be the moſt cruel mortification to her? Can you be ignorant that the air you breathe is fatal to infamy? Will the poor unfortunate dare to mix her breath with yours? will ſhe dare to approach you? She would be as much affected by your preſence, as a creature poſſeſſed would be at the ſacred relics in the hand of the exorciſt: your looks would make her ſink into the earth; the very ſight of you would kill her.

Far be it from me, however, to deſpiſe the unhappy Laura: on the contrary, I admire and reſpect her, the more as her reformation is heroic and extraordinary. But is it ſufficient to authoriſe thoſe mean compariſons by which you debaſe yourſelf; as if, in the indulgence of the greateſt weakneſs, there was not ſomething in true love that is a conſtant ſecurity to our perſon, and which made us tenacious of our honour? But I comprehend and excuſe you. You have but a confuſed view of low and diſtant objects: you look down from your ſublime and elevated ſtation upon the earth, and ſee no inequalities on its ſurface. Your devout humility knows how to take an advantage even of your virtue.

But what end will all this ſerve? Will our natural ſenſations make the leſs impreſſion? Will our ſelf-love be leſs active? In ſpite of your arguments, you feel a repugnance at this match: you tax your ſenſations with pride; you would

would ſtrive againſt them, and attribute them to prejudice. But tell me, my dear, how long has the ſcandal attendant on vice conſiſted in mere opinion? What friendſhip do you think can poſſibly ſubſiſt between you and a woman before whom one cannot mention chaſtity, or virtue, without making her burſt into tears of ſhame, without renewing her ſorrows, without even inſulting her penitence? Believe me, my dear, we may reſpect Laura, but we ought not to ſee her; to avoid her, is the regard which modeſt women owe to her merit; it would be cruel to make her ſuffer in our company.

Nay, farther: you ſay your heart tells you this marriage ought not to take place. Is not this as much as to tell you it will not. Your friend ſays nothing about it in his letter! in the letter which he wrote to me! and yet you ſay that letter is a very long one---and then comes the diſcourſe between you and your huſband---- that huſband of yours is a fly-boots, and ye are a couple of cheats thus to trick me out of the news ye have heard. But then your huſband's ſentiments!---methinks his ſentiments were not ſo neceſſary; particularly for you, who have ſeen the letter; nor indeed were they for me, who have not ſeen it: for I am more certain of the conduct of your friend from my own ſentiments, than from all the wiſdom of philoſophy.

See there now!---did I not tell you ſo? that intruder will be thruſting himſelf in, nobody knows how. For fear he ſhould come again, however, as we are now got into his chapter, let us go through it, that it may be over, and we may have nothing to do with him again.

Let

Let us not bewilder ourſelves with conjectures. Had you not been Julia, had not your friend been your lover, I know not what buſineſs he would now have had with you, nor what I ſhould have had to do with him. All I know is, that if his ill ſtars had ſo ordered it that he had firſt made love to me, it had been all over with his poor head; for whether I am a fool or not, I ſhould certainly have made him one. But what ſignifies what I might have been? let us come to what I am. Attached by inclination to you, from our earlieſt infancy, my heart has been in a manner abſorbed by yours; affectionate and ſuſceptible as I was, I of myſelf was incapable of love or ſenſibility. All my ſentiments came from you; you alone ſtood in the place of the whole world, and I lived only to be your friend. Chaillot ſaw all this, and founded on it the judgment ſhe paſſed on me. In what particular, my dear, have you found her miſtaken?

You know I looked upon your friend as a brother: the lover of my friend, was to me as the ſon of my mother. Neither was it my reaſon, but my heart that gave him this preference. I ſhould have been even more ſuſceptible than I am, had I never experienced any other love. I careſſed you, in careſſing the deareſt part of yourſelf; and the chearfulneſs which attended my embraces, was a proof of their purity. For doth a modeſt woman ever behave ſo to the man ſhe loves? did you behave thus to him? No, Julia, love in a female heart is cautious and timid; reſerve and modeſty are all its advances: it diſcloſes by endeavouring to hide itſelf; and

whenever it confers the favour of its careſſes, it well knows how to ſet a value upon them. Friendſhip is prodigal, but love is avaricious and ſparing.

I acknowledge indeed, that too intimate connections at his age and mine are dangerous; but, with both our hearts engaged by the ſame object, we were ſo accuſtomed to place it between us, that, without annihilating you at leaſt, it was impoſſible for us to come together. Even that familiarity, ſo dangerous on every other occaſion, was then my ſecurity. Our ſentiments depend on our ideas, and when theſe have once taken a certain turn, they are not eaſily perverted. We had talked together too much in one ſtrain, to begin upon another; we had advanced too far to return back the way we came: love is jealous of its prerogative, and will make its own progreſs; it does not chuſe that friendſhip ſhould meet it half-way. In ſhort, I am ſtill of the ſame opinion, that criminal careſſes never take place between thoſe that have been long uſed to the endearing embraces of innocence.

In aid of my ſentiments, came the man deſtined by heaven to conſtitute the momentary happineſs of my life. You know, couſin, he was young, well made, honeſt, complaiſant, and ſolicitous to pleaſe: it is true, he was not ſo great a maſter in love as your friend; but it was me that he loved: and, when the heart is free, the paſſion which is addreſſed to ourſelves, hath always in it ſomething contagious. I returned his affections therefore, with all that remained of mine; and his ſhare was ſuch as left him no room to complain of his choice. With all this,

what

what had I to apprehend? I will even go ſo far as to confeſs, that the prerogatives of the huſband, joined to the duties of a wife, relaxed for a moment the ties of friendſhip; and that, after my change of condition, giving myſelf up to the duties of my new ſtation, I became a more affectionate wife than I was a friend: but in returning to you, I have brought back two hearts inſtead of one, and have not ſince forgot that I alone am charged with that double obligation.

What, my dear friend, ſhall I ſay farther? At the return of our old preceptor, I had, as it were, a new acquaintance to cultivate: methought I looked upon him with very different eyes; my heart fluttered as he ſaluted me, in a manner I had never felt before; and the more pleaſure that emotion gave me, the more it made me afraid. I was alarmed at a ſentiment which ſeemed criminal, and which perhaps would not have exiſted had it not been innocent. I too plainly perceived that he was not, nor could be, any longer your lover; I was too ſenſible that his heart was diſengaged, and that mine was ſo too: you know the reſt, my dear couſin; my fears, my ſcruples were, I ſee, as well known to you as to myſelf. My unexperienced heart was ſo intimidated by ſenſations ſo new to it, that I even reproached myſelf for the earneſt deſire I felt to rejoin you, as if that deſire had not been the ſame before the return of our friend. I was uneaſy that he ſhould be in the very place where I myſelf moſt inclined to be, and believe I ſhould not have been ſo much diſpleaſed to find myſelf leſs deſirous of it, as at

conceiving that it was not entirely on your account.

At length, however, I returned to you, and began to recover my confidence. I was leſs aſhamed of my weakneſs after having confeſſed it to you. I was even leſs aſhamed of it in your company: I thought myſelf protected in turn, and ceaſed to be afraid of myſelf. I reſolved, agreeable to your advice, not to change my conduct towards him. Certainly a greater reſerve would have been a kind of declaration, and I was but too likely to let ſlip involuntary ones, to induce me to make any directly. I continued, therefore, to trifle with him through baſhfulneſs, and to treat him familiarly through modeſty: but perhaps all this, not being ſo natural as formerly, was not attended with the ſame propriety, nor exerted to the ſame degree. From being a trifler, I turned a downright fool; and what perhaps increaſed my aſſurance was, I found I could be ſo with impunity. Whether it was your example that inſpired me, or whether it be that Julia refines every thing that approaches her, I found myſelf perfectly tranquil, while nothing remained of my firſt emotions, but the moſt pleaſing, yet peaceful ſenſations, which required nothing more than the continuance of that calm I enjoyed.

Yes, my dear friend, I am as ſuſceptible and affectionate as you; but I am ſo in a different manner. Perhaps, with more lively paſſions, I am leſs able to govern them; and that very chearfulneſs, which has been ſo fatal to the innocence of others, has preſerved mine. Not that it has been always eaſy, I confeſs; any more

more than it is to remain a widow at my years, and not be ſometimes ſenſible that the day-time conſtitutes but one half of our lives. Nay, notwithſtanding the grave face you put on the matter, I imagine your caſe does not differ in that greatly for mine. Mirth and pleaſantry may then afford no unſeaſonable relief; and perhaps be a better preſervative than graver leſſons. How many times, in the ſtilneſs of the night, when the heart is all open to itſelf, have I driven impertinent thoughts out of my mind, by ſtudying tricks for the next day! how many times have I not averted the danger of a private converſation by an extravagant fancy! There is always, my dear, when one is weak, a time wherein gaiety becomes ſerious; but that time will not come to me. Theſe are at leaſt my ſentiments of the matter, and what I am not aſhamed to confeſs in anſwer to yours.

I readily confirm all that I ſaid in the *elyſium*, as to the growing paſſion I perceived, and the happineſs I had enjoyed during the winter. I indulged myſelf freely in the pleaſing reflections of being always in company with the perſon I loved, while I deſired nothing farther; and, if that opportunity had ſubſiſted, I ſhould have coveted no other. My chearfulneſs was the effect of contentment, and not of artifice. I turned the pleaſure of converſing with him into drollery, and perceived that in contenting myſelf with laughing, I was not paving the way for future ſorrow.

I could not indeed help thinking ſometimes, that my continual playing upon him gave him leſs real diſpleaſure than he affected. The cun-

ning creature was not angry at being offended; and if he was a long time before he could be brought to temper, it was only that he might enjoy the pleaſures of being intreated. Again, I in my turn have frequently laid hold of ſuch occaſions, to expreſs a real tenderneſs for him, appearing all the while to make a jeſt of him: ſo that you would have been puzzled to ſay which was the moſt of a child. One day I remember that you was abſent, he was playing at cheſs with your huſband, while I and the little French-woman were diverting ourſelves at ſhuttlecock in the ſame room; I gave her the ſignal, and kept my eye on our philoſopher; who, I found, by the boldneſs of his looks, and the readineſs of his moves, had the beſt of the game. As the table was ſmall, the cheſs-board hung over its edge; I watched my opportunity, therefore, and, without ſeeming to deſign it, gave the board a knock with a back ſtroke of my racquet, and overturned the whole game on the floor. You never in your life ſaw a man in ſuch a paſſion: he was even ſo enraged, that when I gave him his choice of a kiſs or a box in the ear by way of penance, he ſullenly turned away from me as I preſented him my cheek. I aſked pardon, but to no purpoſe: he was inflexible; and I doubt not that he would have left me on my knees, had I condeſcended to kneel for it. I put an end to his reſentment, however, by another offence, which made him forget the former, and we were better friends than ever.

I could never have extricated myſelf ſo well by any other means; and I once perceived, that, if our play had become ſerious, it might have

proved

proved too much ſo. This was one evening when he played with us that ſimple and affecting duo of Leo's *Vado a morir ben mio*. You ſung indeed with indifference enough: but I did not; for juſt as we came to the moſt pathetic part of the ſong, he leaned forward, and as my hand lay upon the harpſichord, imprinted on it a kiſs, whoſe impreſſion I felt at my heart. I am not very well acquainted with the ardent kiſſes of love; but this I can ſay, that mere friendſhip, not even ours, ever gave or received any thing like that. After ſuch moments, what is the conſequence of reflecting on them in ſolitude, and of bearing him conſtantly in memory? for my part, I was ſo much affected at the time, that I ſung out of tune, and put the muſic out. We went to dancing, I made the philoſopher dance; we eat little or nothing; ſat up very late; and, though I went to bed weary, I only doſed till morning.

I have therefore very good reaſon for not laying any reſtraint on my humour, or changing my manners. The time that will make ſuch an alteration neceſſary is ſo near, that it is not worth while to anticipate it. The time to be prudiſh and reſerved will come but too ſoon. While I am in my twenties, therefore, I ſhall make uſe of my privilege: for when once turned of thirty, people are no longer wild without being ridiculous; and your find-fault of a huſband hath aſſurance enough to tell me already, that I ſhall be allowed but ſix months longer to dreſs a ſallad with my fingers. Patience! to retort his ſarcaſm, however, I tell him I will dreſs it for him in that manner for theſe ſix years to come;

come; and if I do, I proteſt to you he ſhall eat it.——But to return from my ramble.

If we have not the abſolute command over our ſentiments, we have at leaſt ſome over our conduct. I could, without doubt, have requeſted of heaven a heart more at eaſe; but may I be able to my laſt hour, to plead at its dread tribunal, a life as innocent as that which I paſſed this winter! In fact, I have nothing in the leaſt to reproach myſelf with, reſpecting the only man in whoſe power it might be to make me criminal. It is not quite the ſame, my dear, ſince his departure: being accuſtomed to think of him in his abſence, I think of him every hour in the day, and, to confeſs the truth, find him more dangerous in idea than in perſon. When he is abſent, I am over head and ears in love; when preſent, I am only whimſical. Let him return, and all my fears will vaniſh.

The chagrin his abſence gives me, however, is not a little aggravated by my uneaſineſs at his dream. If you have placed all to the account of love, therefore, you are miſtaken; friendſhip has had part in my uneaſineſs. After the departure of our friends, your looks were pale and changed; I expected you every moment to fall ſick. Not that I am credulous: I am only fearful. I know very well, that a bad dream does not neceſſarily produce a ſiniſter event; but I am always afraid leſt ſuch an event ſhould ſucceed it. Not one night's reſt could I get for that unlucky dream, till I ſaw you recover your former bloom. Could I have ſuſpected the effects his anxiety would have had on me, without knowing any thing of it, I would certainly have

have given every thing I had in the world that he ſhould have ſhewn himſelf when he came back ſo much like a fool from Villeneuve. At length, however, my fears vaniſhed with your ſuſpicious looks; your health and appetite having a greater effect on me than your pleaſantries. The arguments theſe ſuſtained at table, againſt my apprehenſions, in time diſſipated them. To increaſe our happineſs, our friend is on his return, and I am in every reſpect delighted. His return, ſo far from alarming me, gives me confidence; and as ſoon as we ſee him again, I ſhall fear nothing for your life, nor my repoſe. In the mean time be careful, dear couſin, of my friend; and be under no apprehenſions for yours; ſhe will take care of herſelf, I will engage for her. And yet I have ſtill a pain at my heart——I feel an oppreſſion which I cannot account for. Ah my dear! to think that we may one day part for ever! that one may ſurvive the other! how unhappy will ſhe be on whom that lot ſhall fall! ſhe will either remain little worthy to live, or lifeleſs before her death.

You will aſk me, to what purpoſe is all this vain lamentation? You will ſay, "Fie on theſe "ridiculous terrors! inſtead of talking of death, "let us chuſe a more entertaining topic, and "talk about your marriage." Your huſband has indeed long entertained ſuch a notion; and perhaps if he had never ſpoken of it to me, it would never have come into my head. I have ſince thought of it now and then, but always with diſdain. It would be abſolutely making an old woman of me; for, if I ſhould have any children by a ſecond marriage, I ſhould certainly

ly conceit myſelf the grandmother of thoſe of the firſt. You are certainly very good to take upon yourſelf ſo readily to ſpare the bluſhes of your friend, and to look upon your taking that trouble as an inſtance of your charitable benevolence. For my own part, nevertheleſs, I can ſee very well that all the reaſons founded on your obliging ſolicitude are not equal to the leaſt of mine againſt a ſecond marriage.

To be ſerious, I am not mean-ſpirited enough to number among thoſe reaſons any reluctance I ſhould have to break an engagement raſhly made with myſelf, nor the fear of being cenſured for doing my duty, nor an inequality in point of fortune in a circumſtance where that perſon reaps the greateſt honour to whom the other would be obliged for his: but, without repeating what I have ſo often told you concerning my caſe of independency and natural averſion to the marriage-yoke, I will abide by only one objection, and this I draw from thoſe ſacred dictates which nobody in the world pays a greater regard to than yourſelf. Remove this obſtacle, couſin, and I give up the point. Amidſt all thoſe airs of mirth and drollery, which give you ſo much alarm, my conſcience is perfectly eaſy. The remembrance of my huſband excites not a bluſh; I even take pleaſure to think him a witneſs of my innocence; for why ſhould I be afraid to do that now he is dead, which I uſed to do when he was living? But will this be the caſe, Julia, if I ſhould violate thoſe ſacred engagements which united us; if I ſhould ſwear to another that everlaſting love, which I have ſo often ſwore to him; if my divided heart

ſhould

ſhould rob his memory of what it beſtowed on his ſucceſſor, and be incapable without offending one to diſcharge the obligations it owes the other? Will not that form, now ſo pleaſing to my imagination, fill me with horror and affright? will it not be ever preſent to poiſon my delight? and will not his remembrance, which now conſtitutes the happineſs of my life, be my future torment? With what face can you adviſe me to take a ſecond huſband, after having vowed never to do the like yourſelf; as if the ſame reaſons which you give me, were not as applicable to yourſelf in the ſame circumſtances? They were friends, you ſay, and loved each other. So much the worſe. With what indignation will not his ſhade behold a man who was dear to him, uſurp his rights, and ſeduce his wife from her fidelity? In ſhort, though it were true that I owed no obligation to the deceaſed, ſhould I owe none to the dear pledge of his love? and can I believe he would ever have choſen me, had he foreſeen that I ſhould ever have expoſed his only child to ſee herſelf undiſtinguiſhed among the children of another?

Another word, and I have done: Who told you, pray, that all the obſtacles between us ariſe from me? In anſwering for him, have you not rather conſulted your will than your power? Or, were you certain of his conſent, do you make no ſcruple to offer me a heart exhauſted by a former paſſion? Do you think that mine ought to be content with it, and that I might be happy with a man I could not make ſo? Think better of it, my dear couſin. Not requiring a greater return of love than I feel, I ſhould not

not be ſatisfied with leſs; and I am too virtuous a woman, to think the pleaſing my huſband a matter of indifference. What ſecurity have you then for the completion of your hopes? Is the pleaſure he may take in my company, which may be only the effect of friendſhip; is that tranſitory delight, which at his age may ariſe only from the difference of ſex: is this, I ſay, a ſufficient foundation? If ſuch pleaſure had produced any laſting ſentiment, is it to be thought he would have been ſo profoundly ſilent, not only to me, but to you, and even to your huſband, by whom an eclairciſſement of that nature could not fail of being favourably received. Has he ever opened his lips on this head to any one? In all the private converſations I have had with him, he talked of nobody but you. In thoſe which you have had, did he ever ſay any thing of me? How can I imagine, that, if he had concealed a ſecret of this kind in his breaſt, I ſhould not have perceived him to be under ſome conſtraint, or that it would not by ſome indiſcretion or other have eſcaped him? Nay, ſince his departure, which of us does he moſt frequently mention in his letters? which of us is the ſubject of his dreams? I admire that you ſhould think me ſo tender and ſuſceptible, and ſhould not at the ſame time ſuppoſe my heart would ſuggeſt all this. But I ſee through your device, my ſweet friend; it is only to authoriſe your pretenſions to repriſals, that you charge me with having formerly ſaved my heart at the expence of yours. But I am not ſo to be made the dupe of your ſubtilty.

Thus ends my confeſſion; which I have made, not

not to contradict, but to ſet you right. I have nothing farther to ſay on this head, than to acquaint you with my reſolution. You now know my heart as well, if not better, than I do. My honour, my happineſs, are equally dear to you as to myſelf; and, in the preſent tranquillity of your paſſions, you will be the beſt able to judge of the means to ſecure both the one and the other. Take my conduct therefore under your direction. I ſubmit it entirely to you. Let us return to our natural ſtate, and reciprocally change our employment; we ſhall both do the better for it: do you govern, and you ſhall find me tractable: let it be your place to direct what I ſhould do, and it ſhall be mine to follow your directions. Take my heart, and incloſe it up in yours; what buſineſs have inſeparables for two?

But let us return to our travellers; though, to ſay truth, I have already ſaid ſo much about one, that I hardly dare ſpeak a word about the other, for fear you ſhould remark too great a difference in my ſtyle, and that even my friendſhip for the generous Engliſhman ſhould betray too much regard for the amiable Swiſs. Beſides, what can I ſay about letters I have not ſeen? you ought at leaſt to ſend me that of Lord B——. But you durſt not ſend it without the other. It is very well. You might, however, have done better. Well, recommend me to your duennas of twenty: they are infinitely more tractable than thoſe of thirty.

I muſt revenge myſelf, however, by informing you of the effect of your fine reſerve. It has only made me imagine the letter in queſ-

tion,—that letter which breathes ſuch a tender—only a hundred times more tender than it probably is. Out of ſpite, I take pleaſure in conceiving it filled with ſoft expreſſions which cannot be in it; ſo that if I am not paſſionately admired, I ſhall make you ſuffer for it.

After all, I cannot ſee with what face you can talk to me of the Italian poſt. You prove in your letter, that I was not in the wrong to wait for it, but for not having waited long enough. Had I ſtayed but one poor quarter of an hour longer, I ſhould have met the packet, have laid hold of it firſt, and read it at my eaſe. It had then been my turn to make a merit of giving it you. But, ſince the grapes are ſo ſour, you may keep the letters. I have two others which I would not change for them were they better worth reading than I imagine they are. There is that of Harriot, I can aſſure you, even exceeds your own; nor have either you or I, in all our lives, ever wrote any thing ſo pretty. And yet you give yourſelf airs forſooth of treating this prodigy as a little impertinent. Upon my word, I ſuſpect that to ariſe from mere envy; and, ſince I have diſcovered in her this new talent, I purpoſe, before you ſpoil her writing as you have done her ſpeech, to eſtabliſh between her apartment and mine an Italian poſt, from whence I will have no pilfering of packets.

Adieu, my dear couſin, you will find incloſed the anſwers to your letters, which will give you no mean idea of my intereſt here. I would write to you ſomething about this country and its inhabitants; but it is high time to put an end to this volume of a letter. You have beſides

ſides quite perplexed me with your ſtrange fancies. As we have five or ſix days longer to ſtay here, and I ſhall have time to give another look at what I have already ſeen, you will be no loſer by the delay: and you may depend on my tranſmitting you another volume as big as this, before my departure.

LETTER CLIII.

Lord B—— *to Mr* WOLMAR.

NO! my dear Wolmar, you were not miſtaken: our young friend is to be depended upon, but I am not: and I have paid dear for the experience that hath convinced me of it. Without his aſſiſtance I ſhould have been a dupe to the very proof to which I put his fidelity. You know, that, to ſatisfy his notions of gratitude, and divert his mind with new objects, I pretended that my journey to Italy was of greater importance than it really was. To bid a final adieu to the attachments of my youth, and bring back a friend perfectly cured of his, were the fruits I promiſed myſelf from the voyage.

I informed you, that his dream at Villeneuve gave me ſome uneaſineſs for him. That dream made me even ſuſpect the motives of his tranſport, on being told that you had choſen him preceptor of your children, and that he ſhould paſs the remainder of his life with you. The better to obſerve the effuſions of his heart, I had at firſt removed all difficulties, by declaring my intention of ſettling alſo in your part of the world;

and thus I prevented any of thoſe objections his friendſhip might have made on account of leaving me. A change in my reſolutions, however, made me ſoon alter my tale.

He had not ſeen the marchioneſs thrice, before we were both agreed in our opinion of her. Unfortunate woman! poſſeſſed of noble qualities, but without virtue! her ardent, ſincere paſſion at firſt affected me, and nouriſhed mine; but her paſſion was tinged with the blackneſs of her ſoul, and inſpired me in the end with horror.

When he had ſeen Laura, and knew her diſpoſition, her beauty, her wit and unexampled attachment, I formed a reſolution to make uſe of her to acquire a perfect knowledge of the ſituation of St Preux. If I marry Laura, ſaid I to him, it is not my intention to carry her to London, where ſhe may be known; but to a place where virtue is reſpected in whomſoever it is found: you will there diſcharge your duty of preceptor, and we ſhall ſtill continue to live together. If I do not marry her, it is time for me nevertheleſs to think of ſettling. You know my houſe in Oxfordſhire, and will make your choice, either to take upon you the education of Mr Wolmar's children, or to accompany me in my retirement. To this, he made me juſt ſuch an anſwer as I expected; but I had a mind to obſerve his conduct. If, in order to ſpend his time at Clarens, he had promoted a marriage which he ought to have oppoſed, or, on the contrary, preferred the honour of his friend to his own happineſs; in either caſe, I ſay, the experiment anſwered my end, and I knew

knew what to think of the ſituation of his heart.

On trial, I found him to be ſuch as I wiſhed; firmly reſolved againſt the project I pretended to have formed; and ready with all his arguments to oppoſe the match. I knew every argument that could be urged againſt it better than he did; but I was continually in her company, and was moved by her tenderneſs and affliction. My heart, totally diſengaged from the marchioneſs, began to fix itſelf on her rival, by this conſtant intercourſe. The ſentiments of Laura increaſed the attachment ſhe had before inſpired; and I began to be aſhamed of ſacrificing to that prejudice I deſpiſed, the eſteem which I was ſo well convinced was due to her merit; I began even to be in doubt, whether I had not laid myſelf under ſome obligation to do that merit juſtice, by the hopes I had given her, if not in words, at leaſt by my actions. Though I never promiſed her any thing, yet to have kept her in ſuſpenſe and expectation for nothing, would be to deceive her; and I could not help thinking ſuch a deception extremely cruel. In ſhort, annexing a kind of duty to my inclination, and conſulting happineſs more than reputation, I attempted to reconcile my paſſion to reaſon, and reſolved to carry my pretended ſcheme as far as it would go, and even to execute it in reality if I could not recede without injuſtice.

After ſome time, however, I began to be more uneaſy on account of St Preux, as he did not appear to act the part he had undertaken with that zeal I expected. Indeed he oppoſed my profeſſed deſign of marriage, but took little pains to check my growing inclination; ſpeak-

ing to me of Laura in ſuch a ſtrain of encomium, as, at the ſame time that he appeared to diſſuade me from marrying her, added fuel to the flame by increaſing my affection. This inconſiſtency gave me ſome alarm; I did not think him ſo ſteady as before. He ſeemed ſhy of directly oppoſing my ſentiments, gave way to my arguments, was fearful of giving offence, and indeed ſeemed to have loſt all that intrepidity in doing his duty which the true paſſion for it inſpires.

Some other obſervations which I made alſo, increaſed my diſtruſt. I found out that he viſited Laura unknown to me; and that, by their frequent ſigns, there was a ſecret underſtanding between them. On her part, the proſpect of being united to the man ſhe loved, ſeemed to give her no pleaſure; I obſerved in her the ſame degree of tenderneſs indeed, but that tenderneſs was no longer mixed with joy at my approach; a gloomy ſadneſs perpetually clouding her features. Nay, ſometimes in the tendereſt part of our converſations, I have caught her caſting a ſide-glance on St Preux; on which a tear would often ſteal ſilently down her cheek, which ſhe endeavoured to conceal from me. In ſhort, they carried the matter ſo far, that I was at laſt greatly perplexed. What could I think? It is impoſſible, ſaid I to myſelf, that I can all this while have been cheriſhing a ſerpent in my boſom? How far have I not reaſon to extend my ſuſpicions, and return thoſe he formerly entertained of me? Weak and unhappy as we are, our misfortunes are generally of our own ſeeking! why do we complain that bad men tor-

ment

ment us, while the good are ſo ingenious at tormenting each other!

All this operated but to induce me to come to a determination. For, though I was ignorant of the bottom of their intrigue, I ſaw the heart of Laura was ſtill the ſame; and that proof of her affection endeared her to me the more. I propoſed to come to an explanation with her before I put an end to the affair; but I was deſirous of putting it off till the laſt moment, in order to get all the light I could poſſibly beforehand. As for St Preux, I was reſolved to convince myſelf, to convince him, and in ſhort to come at the truth of the matter before I took any ſtep in regard to him; for it was eaſy to ſuppoſe that an infallible rupture muſt happen, and I was unwilling to place a good diſpoſition, and a reputation of twenty years ſtanding, in the balance againſt mere ſuſpicions.

The marchioneſs was not ignorant of what paſſed; having her ſpies in the convent where Laura reſides, who informed her of the report of her marriage. Nothing more was neceſſary to excite her rage. She wrote me threatening letters; nay, ſhe went farther; but as it was not the firſt time ſhe had done ſo, and we were on our guard, her attempts were fruitleſs. I had only the pleaſure to ſee that our friend did not ſpare himſelf on this occaſion; nor make any ſcruple to expoſe his own life to ſave that of his friend.

Overcome by the tranſports of her paſſion, the marchioneſs fell ſick, and was ſoon paſt recovery; putting at once an end to her misfortunes and

and her guilt *. I could not help being afflicted to hear of her illneſs, and ſent doctor Eſwin to give her all the aſſiſtance in his power as a phyſician. St Preux went alſo to viſit her on my behalf; but ſhe would neither ſee one nor the other. She would not even bear to hear me named during her illneſs, and inveighed againſt me with the moſt horrid imprecations every time I was mentioned. I was grieved at heart for her ſituation, and felt my wounds ready to bleed afreſh: reaſon however ſupported my ſpirits and reſolution; but I ſhould have been one of the worſt of men, to think of marriage, while a woman, ſo dear to me, lay in that extremity. In the mean time, St Preux, fearing I ſhould not be able to reſiſt the ſtrong inclination I had to ſee her, propoſed a journey to Naples; to which I conſented.

The ſecond day after our arrival there, he came into my chamber with a fixed and grave countenance, holding a letter in his hand, which he ſeemed to have juſt received. I ſtarted up, and cried out, The marchioneſs is dead! Would to God, ſaid he coldly, ſhe were! it were better not to exiſt, than to exiſt only to do evil: but it is not of her I bring you news; though what I bring concerns you nearly: be pleaſed, my Lord, to give me an uninterrupted hearing. I was ſilent, and thus he began.

In honouring me with the ſacred name of friend, you taught me how to deſerve it. I have ac-

* By a letter not publiſhed in this collection, it appears that Lord B—— was of opinion, that the ſouls of the wicked are annihilated in death.

acquitted myſelf of the charge you intruſted with me; and ſeeing you ready to forget yourſelf, have ventured to aſſiſt your memory. I ſaw you unable to break one connection but by entering into another; both equally unworthy of you. Had an unequal marriage been the only point in queſtion, I ſhould only have reminded you, that you was a peer of England; and adviſed you either to renounce all pretenſions to public honour, or to reſpect public opinion. But a marriage ſo ſcandalous! can you? no, my Lord, you will not make ſo unworthy a choice. It is not enough that your wife ſhould be virtuous, her reputation ſhould be unſtained.—— Believe me, a wife for Lord B—— is not eaſily to be found. Read that, my Lord, and ſee what I have done.

He then gave me a letter. It was from Laura. I opened it with emotion, and read as follows.

" My Lord,

" Love at length prevailed, and you were willing to marry me: but I am content. Your friend has pointed out my duty, and I perform it without regret: in diſhonouring you, I ſhould have lived unhappily; in leaving your honour unſtained, methinks I partake of it. The ſacrifice of my felicity to a duty ſo ſevere, makes me forget even the ſhame of my youth. Farewell! from this moment I am no longer in your power or my own. Adieu, my Lord, for ever! Purſue me not in my retreat to deſpair, but hear my laſt requeſt: Confer not on any other woman

man that honour I could not accept. There was but one heart in the world made for yours, and it was that of

Laura."

The agitation of mind I was in, on reading this letter, prevented me from ſpeaking. He took the advantage of my ſilence, to tell me, that after my departure, ſhe had taken the vail in the convent where ſhe boarded; that the court of Rome being informed that ſhe was going to be married to a Lutheran, had given orders to prevent his ſeeing her; and confeſſed to me frankly, that he had taken all theſe meaſures in concert with herſelf. I did not oppoſe your deſigns, continued he, with all the power I might; fearing your return to the marchioneſs, and being deſirous of combating your old paſſion by that which you entertained for Laura. In ſeeing you run greater lengths than I intended, I applied to your underſtanding: but having from my own experience but too juſt reaſon to diſtruſt the power of argument, I ſounded the heart of Laura; and finding in it all that generoſity which is inſeparable from true love, I prevailed on her to make this ſacrifice. The aſſurance of being no longer the object of your contempt, inſpired her with a fortitude which renders her the more worthy of your eſteem. She has done her duty, you muſt now do yours.

Then eagerly embracing and preſſing me to his heart, 'My honoured friend, ſays he, I read 'in our common deſtiny thoſe laws which hea-'ven dictates to both, and requires us to obey. 'The empire of love is at an end, and that of 'friend-

'friendſhip begins: my heart attends only to 'its ſacred call, it knows no other tie than that 'which unites me to you. Fix on whatever 'place of reſidence you pleaſe, Clarens, Ox-'ford, London, Paris, or Rome; it is equal 'to me, ſo we but live together. Go whither 'you will, ſeek an aſylum wherever you think 'fit, I will follow you throughout the world: 'for I ſolemnly proteſt, in the face of the living 'God, that till death I will never leave you.'

I was greatly affected at the zeal and affection of this young man; his eyes ſparkling with pleaſure on this effuſion of his heart. I forgot at once both the marchioneſs and Laura. Is there indeed any thing in the world to be regretted, while one preſerves ſo dear a friend? Indeed, I was now fully convinced, by the part he ſo readily took on this occaſion, that he was entirely cured of his ancient paſſion; and that the pains you had taken, were not thrown away upon him. In ſhort, I could not doubt, by the ſolemn engagement he had thus voluntarily made, that his attachment to me was truly ſincere; and that his virtue had entirely got the better of his inclinations. I can therefore bring him back with confidence. Yes, my dear Wolmar, he is worthy to educate youth; and what is more, of being received into your houſe.

A few days after, I received an account of the death of the marchioneſs; at which I was but little affected, as ſhe had indeed been long dead in reſpect to me. I had hitherto regarded marriage as a debt, which every man contracts at the time of his birth, with his country and mankind;

kind; for which reaſon, I had reſolved to marry, the leſs out of inclination than duty; but I am now of another opinion. The obligation to marriage, I now conceive, is not ſo univerſal, but that it depends on the rank and ſituation which every man holds in life. Celibacy is, doubtleſs, wrong in the common people, ſuch as manufacturers, huſbandmen, and others, who are really uſeful and neceſſary to the ſtate. But for thoſe ſuperior orders of men, who compoſe the legiſlature and the magiſtracy, to which every other aſpires, and which are always ſufficiently ſupplied, it is both lawful and expedient. For were the rich all obliged to marry, the increaſe of number among thoſe ſubjects which are a dead weight on the ſtate, would only tend to its depopulation. Mankind will always find maſters enough, and England will ſooner want labourers than peers.

I think myſelf at full liberty, therefore, in the rank to which I was born, to indulge my own inclination in this reſpect. At my age, it is too late to think of repairing the ſhocks my heart hath ſuſtained from love. I ſhall devote my future hours therefore to friendſhip, the pleaſures of which I can no where cultivate ſo well as at Clarens. I accept, therefore, your obliging offers, on ſuch conditions, as my fortune ought to add to yours, that it may not be uſeleſs to me. Beſides, after the engagements St Preux hath entered into, I know no other method of detaining him with you, but by reſiding with you myſelf; and if ever he grows tired or troubleſome, it will be ſufficient for me to leave you, to make him follow. The only embarraſſment

I ſhall

I ſhall in this caſe lie under, reſpects my cuſtomary voyages to England; for though I have no longer any intereſt in the houſe of peers, yet while I am one of the number, I think it neceſſary I ſhould continue to do my duty as ſuch. But I have a faithful friend among my brother-peers, whom I can empower to anſwer for me in ordinary caſes; and on extraordinary occaſions, wherein I think it my duty to go over in perſon, I can take my pupil along with me; and even he, his pupils with him, when they grow a little bigger, and you can prevail on yourſelf to truſt them with us. Such voyages cannot fail of being uſeful to them, and will not be ſo very long as to make their abſence afflicting to their mother.

I have not ſhewn this letter to St Preux, nor do I deſire you ſhould ſhew every part of it to the ladies: it is proper that my ſcheme to ſound the heart of our friend ſhould be known only to you and me. I would not have you conceal any thing from them, however, that may do honour to this worthy youth, even though it ſhould be diſcovered at my expence. Adieu, my dear Wolmar.

I have ſent the deſigns and drawings for my pavilion, for you to reform, alter, and amend, as you pleaſe; but I would have you to execute them immediately, if poſſible. I would have ſtruck out the muſic-room; for I have now loſt almoſt all pretenſions to taſte, and am careleſs of amuſement: at the requeſt of St Preux, however, I have left it, as he propoſes now and then to exerciſe your children there. You will receive alſo ſome few books, to add to

your library. But what novelty will you find in books? No, my dear Wolmar, you only want to underſtand natures volume, to be the wiſeſt of men.

LETTER CLIV.

Answer.

I Was impatient, my dear B——, to come to the end of your adventures. It ſeemed very ſtrange to me, that, after having ſo long reſiſted the force of your inclinations, you had waited only for a friend to aſſiſt you to give way to them: though to ſay truth, we find ourſelves often more weak when ſupported by others, than when we rely ſolely on our own ſtrength. I confeſs, however, I was greatly alarmed by your laſt letter, when you told me your marriage with Laura was a thing abſolutely determined. Not but that, in ſpite of this aſſurance, I ſtill entertained ſome doubts of the event; and if my ſuſpicions had been diſappointed, I would never have ſeen St Preux again. As it is, you have both acted as I flattered myſelf you would; and have ſo fully juſtified the good opinion I had of you, that I ſhall be delighted whenever you think proper to return, and ſettle here agreeable to the deſign we had planned. Come, ye uncommon friends! come to increaſe and partake of the happineſs we here enjoy. However flattering may be the hopes of thoſe who believe in a future ſtate, for my part, I had rather enjoy the preſent in their company; nay, I perceive

you

you are both more agreeable to me with the tenets you poſſeſs, than you would be if unhappy enough to think as I do.

As to our friend, you know what were my ſentiments of him at your departure. There was no need to make any experiment on his heart to ſettle my judgment concerning him: for my proof had been before made, and I thought I knew him as well as it was poſſible for one man to know another. I had, beſides, more than one reaſon to place a confidence in him; and was more ſecure of him than he was of himſelf. For though he ſeems to have followed your example in renouncing matrimony, you will perhaps find reaſon here to prevail on him to change his ſyſtem. But I will explain myſelf farther on this head when I ſee you.

With reſpect to yourſelf, I think your ſentiments on celibacy quite new and refined. They may, for aught I know, be judicious alſo, when applied to political inſtitutions, intended to balance and keep in æquilibrio the relative powers of ſtates; but I am in doubt, whether they are not more ſubtle than ſolid, when applied to diſpenſe with the obligations that individuals lie under to the laws of nature. It ſeems to me that life is a bleſſing we receive on condition of tranſmitting it to our ſucceſſors; a kind of tenure which ought to paſs from generation to generation; and that every one who had a father, is indiſpenſably obliged to become one. Such has been hitherto your opinion alſo; it was one of your motives for going to Italy: but I know from whence you derive your new ſyſtem of philoſophy; there is an argument in Laura's

letter, which your heart knows not how to invalidate.

Our ſprightly couſin has been for theſe eight or ten days paſt at Geneva, with her relations, on family-affairs: but we daily expect her to return. I have told my wife as much as was expedient ſhe ſhould know of your letter. We had learnt of Mr Miol, that your marriage was broken off; but ſhe was ignorant of the part St Preux had in that event; and you may be aſſured it will give her great pleaſure to be informed of all he has done to merit your beneficence, and juſtify your eſteem. I have ſhewn her the plan and deſigns for your pavilion, in which ſhe thinks there is much taſte. We propoſe to make ſome little alterations, however, as the ground requires; which, as they will make your lodging the more convenient, we doubt not you will approve. We wait, nevertheleſs, for the ſanction of Clara, before we reſolve; for, without her, you know there is nothing to be done here. In the mean time, I have ſet the people to work, and hope to have the maſonry pretty well advanced before winter.

I thank you for your books; but I no longer read thoſe I am maſter of, and it is too late in life for me to begin to ſtudy thoſe I do not underſtand. I am, however, not quite ſo ignorant as you would make me. The only volume of nature's works which I read, is the heart of man; of my abilities for comprehending which, my friendſhip for you is a ſufficient proof.

LET-

LETTER CLV.

Mrs ORBE *to Mrs* WOLMAR.

MY ſtay here, my dear couſin, gives me a world of anxieties; the worſt of all which is, that the agreeableneſs of the place would induce me to ſtay longer. The city is delightful, its inhabitants hoſpitable, and their manners courteous; while liberty, which I love of all things, ſeems to have taken refuge amongſt them. The more I know of this little ſtate, the more I find an attachment to one's country agreeable; and pity thoſe who, pretending to call themſelves of this or that country, have no attachment to any. For my part, I perceive, that, if I had been born in this, I ſhould have had truly a Roman ſoul. As it is, I dare not, however, pretend to ſay that

Roms is no more at Rome, but where I dwell;

For I am afraid you will be malicious enough, to think the contrary. But why need we talk always about Rome, and Rome? the ſubject of this letter ſhall be Geneva.

I ſhall ſay nothing about the face of the country; it is much like ours, except that it is leſs mountainous, and more rural. Nor ſhall I ſay any thing about the government: my good father will, doubtleſs, give you enough of it; as he is employed here all day long, in the fulneſs of his heart, talking politics with the magiſtrates; and I find him not a little mortified that the Gazette ſo ſeldom makes mention of Geneva. You

may judge of the tediouſneſs of their converſation, by the length of my letters: for, when I am wearied with their diſcourſe, I leave them; and, in order to divert myſelf, am tireſome to you.

All I remember of their long conferences is, that they hold in high eſteem the great good ſenſe which prevails in this city. When we regard indeed the mutual action and re-action of all parts of the ſtate, which afford a reciprocal balance to each other, it is not to be doubted that there are greater abilities employed in the government of this little republic than in that of ſome great kingdoms, where every thing ſupports itſelf by its own proper ſtrength, and where the reins of adminiſtration may be thrown into the hands of a blockhead, without any danger to the conſtitution. I can aſſure you, this is not the caſe here. I never hear any body talk to my father about the famous miniſters of great courts, without thinking of the wretched muſician who thundered away upon our great organ at Lauſanne, and thought himſelf a prodigious able hand becauſe he made a great noiſe. The people here have only a little ſpinnet; but in general they make good harmony, though the inſtrument be now and then a little out of tune.

Neither ſhall I ſay any thing about——but with telling you what I ſhall not ſay, I ſhall never have done. To begin then with ſomething, that I may ſooner come to a concluſion: Of all people in the world, thoſe of Geneva are the moſt eaſily known and characteriſed. Their manners, and even their vices, are mixed with a certain frankneſs peculiar to themſelves. They

are conſcious of their natural goodneſs of heart, and that makes them not afraid to appear ſuch as they are. They have generoſity, ſenſe, and penetration: but they are apt to love money too well; a fault which I attribute to their ſituation and circumſtances, which make it ſo neceſſary; the territory of this ſtate not producing a ſufficient nouriſhment for its inhabitants. Hence it happens that the natives of Geneva, who are ſcattered up and down Europe to make their fortunes, copy the airs of foreigners; and, having adopted the vices of the countries where they have lived, bring them home in triumph with their wealth *. Thus the luxury of other nations makes them deſpiſe the ſimplicity of their own; its ſpirit and liberty appear ignoble; and they forge themſelves chains of gold, not as marks of ſlavery, but as ornaments of pride.

But what have I to do with theſe confounded politics? Indeed here I am ſtunned with them, and have them conſtantly rung in my ears. I hear nothing elſe talked of; unleſs when my father is abſent, which never happens except when the poſt arrives. It is ourſelves, my dear, nevertheleſs, that infect every place we go to; for, as to the converſation of the people, it is generally uſeful and agreeable; indeed there is little to be learned even from books, which may not here be acquired by converſation. The manners of the Engliſh have reached as far as this country; and the men, living more ſeparate from the women than in ours, contract among themſelves

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* At preſent they do not take the trouble to ſeek the vices of foreigners; the latter are ready enough to bring them.

a graver turn, and have more ſolidity in their diſcourſe. This advantage is attended, nevertheleſs, with an inconvenience that is very ſoon experienced. They are extremely prolix, formal, ſententious, and argumentative. Inſtead of writing, like Frenchmen, as they ſpeak, they on the contrary, ſpeak as they write. They declaim, inſtead of talking; and one thinks they are always going to ſupport a Theſis. They divide their diſcourſe into chapters and ſections, and take the ſame method in their converſation as they do in their books. They ſpeak as if they were reading, ſtrictly obſerving etymological diſtinctions, and pronouncing their words exactly as they are ſpelt: in ſhort, their converſations conſiſt of harangues, and they prattle as if they were preaching.

But what is the moſt ſingular, is, that, with this dogmatical and frigid air in their diſcourſe, they are lively, impetuous, and betray ſtrong paſſions; nay, they would expreſs themſelves well enough upon ſentimental ſubjects, if they were not too particular in words, or knew how to addreſs the heart. But their periods and their commas are inſupportable; and they deſcribe ſo compoſedly the moſt violent paſſions, that, when they have done, one looks about one to ſee who is affected.

In the mean time, I muſt confeſs I am bribed a little to think well of their hearts, and to believe they are not altogether void of taſte. For you muſt know, as a ſecret, that a very pretty gentleman for a huſband, and, as they ſay, very rich, hath honoured me with his regards; and I have more gratitude and politeneſs than to call

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in queſtion what he has told me. Had he but come eighteen months ſooner, what pleaſure ſhould I have taken in having a ſovereign for my ſlave, and in turning the head of a noble Lord! but at preſent, mine is not clear enough to make that ſport agreeable.

But to return to that taſte for reading which makes the people of Geneva think. It extends to all ranks and degrees amonſt them, and is of advantage to all. The French read a great deal; but they read only new books; or rather they run them over, leſs for the ſake of knowing what they contain, than to have it to ſay they have read them. On the contrary, the readers at Geneva peruſe only books of merit; they read, and digeſt what they read; making it their buſineſs to underſtand, not to criticiſe upon them. Criticiſms and the choice of books are made at Paris; while choice books are almoſt the only ones that are read at Geneva. By this means, their reading has leſs variety and is more profitable. The women, on their part, employ a good deal of their time alſo in reading *; and their converſation is affected by it, but in a different manner. The fine ladies are affected, and ſet up for wits here, as well as with us. Nay, the petty citizens themſelves learn from their books a kind of methodical chit-chat, a choice of words which one is ſurpriſed to hear from them, as we are ſometimes with the prattle of forward children. They muſt unite all the good ſenſe of the

* It is to be remembered that theſe letters were written ſome years ago; a circumſtance, I am afraid, that will be often ſuggeſted to the reader.

the men, all the ſprightlineſs of the women, and all the wit common to both; or the former will appear a little pedantic, and the latter prudiſh.

As I was looking out of my window yeſterday, I overheard two tradeſmens daughters, both very pretty, talking together in a manner ſprightly enough to attract my attention. I liſtened, and heard one of them propoſe to the other, laughing, to write a journal of their tranſactions. "Yes, replied the other immediately, a journal of a morning and a comment at night." What ſay you, couſin? I know not if this be the ſtyle of tradeſmens daughters; but I know one muſt be taken up greatly indeed, not to be able, during the whole day, to make more than a comment on what has paſſed. I fancy this laſs had read the Arabian Nights Entertainments.

Thus with a ſtyle a little elevated, the women of Geneva are lively and ſatyrical; and one ſees here the effect of the nobler paſſions, as much as in any city in the world. Even in the ſimplicity of their dreſs there is taſte; they are graceful alſo in their manners, and agreeable in converſation. As the men are leſs gallant than affectionate, the women are leſs coquettiſh than tender; their ſuſceptibility gives, even to the moſt virtuous among them, an agreeable and refined turn, which reaches the heart, and thence deduces all its refinement. So long as the ladies of Geneva preſerve their own manners, they will be the moſt amiable women in Europe; but they are in danger of being ſoon all Frenchified, and then French-women will be more agreeable than they.

Thus every thing goes to ruin, when manners grow

grow corrupted. Even taſte depends on morals, and diſappears with them, giving way to affected and pompous pretenſions that have no other foundation than faſhion. True wit alſo lies nearly under the ſame circumſtances. It is not the modeſty of our ſex that obliges us to make uſe of addreſs to reſiſt the arts of men: and, if they are reduced to make uſe of artifice to excite our attention, have we leſs occaſion for ingenuity to ſeem not to underſtand them? Is it not the men who ſet out our tongues and wits at liberty; who make us ſo keen at repartee, and oblige us to turn their perſons and pretenſions into ridicule? You may ſay what you will, but I maintain it, that a certain coquettiſh air and malicious raillery confounds a gallant much more than ſilence or contempt. What pleaſure have I not taken in ſeeing a diſcontented Celadon bluſh, ſtammer, and loſe himſelf at every word; while the ſhafts of ridicule, leſs flaming but more pointed than thoſe of love, flew about him like hail; in ſeeing him ſhot through and through with icicles, whoſe coldneſs added to the ſmart of the wounds! even you yourſelf, who never loved to give pain, do you believe your mild and ingenuous behaviour, your timid, gentle looks, conceal leſs roguery and art than my hoydening? Upon my word, my dear, I much doubt, with all your hypocritical airs, if an account were taken of all the lovers you and I have made fools of, whether yours would not be the longer liſt. I cannot help laughing every time I think of that poor Conflans, who came to me in ſuch a paſſion to reproach you with having too great a regard for him.

him. She is ſo obliging to me, ſays he, that I know not what to complain of; and declines my pretenſions with ſo much good ſenſe, that I am aſhamed of finding myſelf ſo unable to reply to her arguments; in ſhort, ſhe is ſo much my friend, that I find myſelf incapable of ſupporting the character of her lover.

I believe there is no place in the world where married people agree better, and are better managers, than in this city: here a domeſtic life is peaceful and agreeable; the huſbands are in general obliging, and the wives almoſt Julias. Here your ſyſtem really exiſts. The two ſexes employ and amuſe themſelves ſo differently, that they are never tired with each other's cuſtoms and company, but meet again with redoubled pleaſure. This heightens the enjoyment of the wife; abſtinence from what we delight in, is a tenet of your philoſophy; it is indeed the epicuriſm of reaſon.

Unhappily, however, this ancient modeſty begins a little to decline. The ſexes begin to aſſociate more frequently, they approach in perſon, and their hearts recede. It is here as with us, every thing is a mixture of good and bad, but in different proportions. The virtues of the natives of this country are of its own production; their vices are exotic. They are great travellers, and eaſily adopt the cuſtoms and manners of other nations; they ſpeak other languages with facility, and learn without difficulty their proper accent; nevertheleſs, they have a diſagreeable drawling tone in the pronunciation of their own; particularly among the women, who travel but little. More humbled by their

inſignificance, than proud of their liberty, they ſeem among foreigners to be aſhamed of their country, and are therefore in a hurry, as one may ſay, to naturaliſe themſelves in that where they happen to reſide; and perhaps the character they have of being avaricious and ſelfiſh, contributes not a little to this falſe ſhame. It would be better, without doubt, to wipe off the ſtain by a diſintereſted example, than to ſcandaliſe their fellow-citizens by being aſhamed of their country. But they deſpiſe the place of their nativity, even while they render it eſtimable; and are ſtill more in the wrong not to give their city the honour of their own perſonal merit.

Nevertheleſs, however avaricious they may be, they are not accuſed of amaſſing fortunes by low and ſervile means: they ſeldom attach themſelves to the great, or dance attendance at courts; perſonal ſlavery being as odious to them as that of the community. Pliant and flexible as Alcibiades, they are equally impatient of ſervitude; and, though they adopt the cuſtoms of other nations, they imitate the people without being ſlaves to the prince. They are chiefly employed in trade, becauſe that is the ſureſt road to wealth, conſiſtent with liberty. And this great object of their wiſhes makes them often bury the talents with which they are prodigally endowed by nature. This brings me back to the beginning of my letter. They have ingenuity and courage, are lively and penetrating, nor is there any thing virtuous or great which ſurpaſſes their comprehenſion and abilities. But, more paſſionately fond of money than of honour, in order to live in abundance they die in obſcurity; and the on-

ly example they leave to their children, is the love of thoſe treaſures which for their ſakes they have amaſſed.

All this I learn from the natives themſelves; for they ſpeak of their own characters very impartially. For my part, I know not what they may be abroad, but at home they are an agreeable people; and I know but one way to quit Geneva without regret. Do you know, couſin, what this is? you may affect as much ignorance and humility as you pleaſe; if you ſhould ſay you have not already gueſſed, you certainly would tell a fib. The day after to-morrow our jovial company will embark in a pretty little ſhip, fitted out for the occaſion: for we chuſe to return by water on account of the pleaſantneſs of the ſeaſon, and that we may be altogether. We purpoſe to paſs the firſt night at Morges, to be the next day at Lauſanne, on account of the marriage-ceremony, and the day following to be at —— you know where. When you ſee at a diſtance the flags flying, the torches flaming, and hear the cannon roar; I charge you ſkud about the houſe like a mad thing, and call the whole family to arms! to arms! the enemy! the enemy is at hand!

P. S. Although the diſtribution of the apartments inconteſtibly belongs to me as houſekeeper, I will give it up to you on this occaſion; inſiſting only that my father be placed in thoſe of Lord B—— on account of his charts and maps; with which I deſire it may be compleatly hung from the ceiling to the floor.

LET-

LETTER CLVI.

From Mrs WOLMAR.

WHAT delightful ſenſations do I experience in beginning this letter! It is the firſt time in my life that I ever wrote to you without fear or ſhame! I am proud of the friendſhip which now ſubſiſts between us, as it is the fruit of an unparalleled conqueſt, over a fatal paſſion: a paſſion which may ſometimes be overcome, but is very rarely refined into friendſhip. To relinquiſh, when honour requires it, that which was once dear to us, may be done by the efforts of ordinary minds; but to have been what we once were to each other, and to become what we now are, this is a triumph indeed. The motive for ceaſing to love may poſſibly be a vicious one; but that which converts the moſt tender paſſion into as ſincere a friendſhip, cannot be equivocal, cannot be but virtuous.

Would we ever have arrived at this of ourſelves? never, never, my good friend; it had been raſhneſs to attempt it. To avoid each other was the firſt article of our duty, and which nothing ſhould have prevented us from performing. We might without doubt have continued mutual eſteem; but we muſt have ceaſed to write, or to converſe. All thoughts of each other muſt have been ſuppreſſed, and the greateſt regard we could have reciprocally ſhewn, had been to break off all correſpondence.

But, inſtead of that, what is our preſent ſituation? Can there be on earth a more agreeable,

one, and do we not reap a thouſand times a-day the reward of our ſelf-denial? To ſee, to love each other, to be ſenſible of our bliſs to paſs our days together in fraternal intimacy and peaceful innocence; to think of each other without remorſe, to ſpeak without bluſhing; to do honour to that attachment for which we have been ſo often reproached; this is the point at which we are at laſt arrived. O my friend! how far in the career of honour have we already run! let us reſolve to perſevere, and finiſh our race as we have begun.

And to whom are we indebted for ſuch extraordinary happineſs? You know it well. I have ſeen your ſuſceptible heart overflow with gratitude at the goodneſs of the beſt of men, to whom both you and I have been ſo greatly obliged; a goodneſs that does not lay us under freſh obligations, but only renders thoſe more dear which were before ſacred. The only way to acknowledge his favours, is to merit them; for the only value he ſets on them conſiſts in their emolument to us. Let us then reward our benefactor by our virtue; for this is all he requires, and therefore all we owe him. He will be ſatisfied with us and with himſelf, in having reſtored us to reaſon and to ourſelves.

Permit me, now, to lay before you a picture of your future ſituation, that you may examine it if there be any thing in it to make you apprehenſive of danger. Yes, worthy youth, if you reſpect the cauſe of virtue, attend with a chaſte ear to the counſels of your friend. I tremble to enter upon a ſubject in which I am ſorry to engage; but how ſhall I be ſilent without betray-

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ing my friend? will it not be too late to warn you of the danger when you are already entangled in the ſnare? Yes, my friend, I am the only perſon in the world who is intimate enough with you to preſent it to your view. Have I not a right to talk to you as a ſiſter, as a mother?

Your career, you tell me, is finiſhed; if ſo, its end is premature. Though your firſt paſſion be extinguiſhed, your ſenſibility ſtill remains; and your heart is the more to be ſuſpected, as its only cauſe of reſtraint no longer exiſts. A young man of great ardour and ſuſceptibility reſolves to live continent and chaſte; he knows, he feels, he has a thouſand times ſaid, that fortitude of mind, which is productive of every virtue, depends on the purity of ſentiment which ſupports it. As love preſerved him from vice in his youth, his good ſenſe muſt ſecure him in manhood; however ſevere may be the duty enjoined him, he knows there is a pleaſure ariſing from it, that will compenſate its rigour; and, though it be neceſſary to enter the conflict when conqueſt is in view, can he do leſs now out of piety to God than he did before out of regard to a miſtreſs? Such I imagine is your way of reaſoning, and ſuch the maxims you adopt for your future conduct: for you have always deſpiſed thoſe perſons who, content with outward appearances, have one doctrine for theory and another for practice, and who lay upon others a burden of moral duties which they themſelves are unwilling to bear.

But what kind of life has ſuch a prudent, virtuous man made choice of, in order to comply with thoſe rules he has preſcribed? Leſs a phi-

loſopher than a man of probity and a Chriſtian, he has not ſurely taken his vanity for a guide: he certainly knows that it is much eaſier to avoid temptations, than to withſtand them. Does he therefore avoid all dangerous opportunities? does he ſhun thoſe objects which are moſt likely to move his paſſions? has he that humble diffidence of himſelf which is the beſt ſecurity to virtue? Quite the contrary; he does not heſitate raſhly to ruſh on danger. At thirty years of age, he is going to ſeclude himſelf from the world, in company with women of his own age; one of which was once too dear to him for him ever to baniſh the dangerous idea of their former intimacy from his mind; another of whom has lived with him in great familiarity, and a third attached to him by all thoſe ties which obligations conferred excite in grateful minds. He is going to expoſe himſelf to every thing that can renew thoſe paſſions which are but imperfectly extinguiſhed; he is going to entangle himſelf in thoſe ſnares which he ought, of all others, to avoid. There is not one circumſtance attending his ſituation which ought not to make him diſtruſt his own ſtrength, nor one which will not render him for ever contemptible ſhould he be weak enough to be off his guard for a moment. Where then is that great fortitude of mind, in which he preſumes to place ſuch confidence? In what inſtance has it hitherto appeared that he can be anſwerable for it, for the future? Did he acquire it at Paris, in the houſe of the colonel's lady? or was he influenced by it laſt ſummer at Meillerie? Has it been his ſecurity during the winter, againſt

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the charms of another object, or this ſpring againſt the terrifying apprehenſions of a dream? By the ſlender aſſiſtance it once afforded him, is there any reaſon to ſuppoſe it will always bring him off victorious? He may know, when his duty requires, how to combat the paſſions of a friend; but will he be as capable of combating his own? Alas! let him learn from the beſt half of his life to think modeſtly of the other.

One may ſupport a ſtate of violence and conſtraint for a while. Six months, for inſtance, a year, is nothing; fix any certain time, and we may preſume to hold out. But when that ſtate is to laſt as long as we live, where is the fortitude that can ſupport itſelf under it? Who can ſuſtain a conſtant ſtate of ſelf-denial! O my friend! a life of pleaſure is ſhort, but a life of virtue is exceeding long. We muſt be inceſſantly on our guard. The inſtant of enjoyment is ſoon paſſed, and never more returns; that of doing evil paſſes away too, but as conſtantly returns, and is ever preſent. Forget ourſelves for a moment, and we are undone. Is it in ſuch a ſtate of danger and trial, that our days can paſs away in happineſs and tranquillity? or is it for ſuch as have once eſcaped the danger to expoſe themſelves again?

What future occaſions may not ariſe as hazardous as thoſe you have eſcaped, and, what is worſe, equally unforeſeen? Do you think the monuments of danger exiſt only at Meillerie? they are in every place where we are; we carry them about with us: yes, you know too well that a ſuſceptible mind intereſts the whole univerſe in its paſſion; and that every object here will

will excite our former ideas, and remind us of our former ſenſations.

I am preſumptuous enough, however, to believe, that will never happen to me; and my heart is ready enough to anſwer for yours. But, though it may be above meanneſs, is that eaſy heart of yours above weakneſs? and am I the only perſon here it will coſt you pains to *reſpect?* Forget not, St Preux, that all who are dear to me are intitled to be reſpected as myſelf; reflect that you are continually to bear the innocent play of an amiable woman; think of the eternal diſgrace you will deſervedly fall into, if your heart ſhould go aſtray for a moment, and you ſhould harbour any deſigns on her you have ſo much reaſon to honour.

I would have your duty, your word, and your ancient friendſhip reſtrain you. The obſtacles which virtue throws in your way, may ſerve to diſcourage idle hopes; and, by the help of your reaſon, you may ſuppreſs your fruitleſs wiſhes: but would you thence be freed from the influence of ſenſe, and the ſnares of imagination? Obliged to reſpect us both and to forget our ſex, you will be liable to temptation from our ſervants, and might perhaps think yourſelf juſtified by the condeſcenſion: but would you be in reality leſs culpable? or can the difference of rank change the nature of a crime? on the contrary, you would debaſe yourſelf the more, as the means you might employ would be more ignoble. But is it poſſible that you ſhould be guilty of ſuch means! no, periſh the baſe man, who would bargain for an heart, and make love a mercenary paſſion! Such men are the cauſe of all the crimes

crimes which are committed by debauchery: for ſhe who is once bought, will be ever after to be ſold; and, amidſt the ſhame into which ſhe is inevitably plunged, who may moſt properly be ſaid to be the author of her miſery, the brutal wretch who inſults her in a brothel, or her ſeducer who ſhewed her the way thither, by firſt paying a price for her favours?

I will add another conſideration' which, if I am not miſtaken, will affect you. You have been witneſs of the pains I have taken to eſtabliſh order and decency in my family. Tranquillity and modeſty, happineſs and innocence, prevail throughout the whole. Think, my friend, of yourſelf, of me, of what we were, of what we are, and what we ought to be. Shall I have it one day to ſay, in regretting my loſt labour, It is to you I owe the diſorder of my houſe?

Let us, if it be neceſſary, go farther, and ſacrifice even modeſty to a true regard for virtue. Man is not made for a life of celibacy; and it is very difficult, in a ſtate ſo contrary to that of nature, not to fall into ſome public or private irregularity. For how ſhall a man be always on his guard againſt an inteſtine enemy? Look upon the raſh votaries of other countries, who enter into a ſolemn vow not to be men. To puniſh them for their preſumption, heaven abandons them to their own weakneſs: they call themſelves ſaints, for entering into engagements which neceſſarily make them ſinners; their continence is only pretended, and, for affecting to ſet themſelves above the duties of humanity, they debaſe themſelves below it. It is eaſy to

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ſtand upon punctilio, and affect a nice obſervance of laws which are kept only in appearance*; but a truly virtuous man cannot but perceive that his eſſential duties are ſufficient without extending them to works of ſupererogation. It is, my dear St Preux, the true humility of a Chriſtian, always to think his duty too much for his ſtrength: apply this rule, and you will be ſenſible, that a ſituation which might only alarm another man, ought to make you tremble. The leſs you are afraid, the more reaſon you have to fear; and if you are not in ſome degree dettered by the ſeverity of your duty, you can have little hopes of being able to fulfil it.

Such are the perils that threaten you here. I know that you will never deliberately venture to do ill; and the only evils you have cauſe to apprehend are thoſe which you cannot foreſee. I do not however bid you draw your concluſions ſolely from my reaſoning; but recommend it to your mature conſideration. If you can anſwer me in a manner ſatisfactory to yourſelf, I ſhall be ſatisfied; if you can rely upon yourſelf, I too ſhall rely upon you. Tell me that you have overcome all the foibles of humanity, that you are an angel; and I will receive you with open arms.

But

* Some men are continent without having any merit in it, others are ſo through virtue, and I doubt not there are many Romiſh prieſts in the latter ſituation: but to impoſe a ſtate of celibacy on ſo numerous a body of men as the clergy of that church, it is not to bid them abſtain from women, but to be content with the wives of other men. I am really ſurpriſed that in countries where morals are held in any eſteem, the legiſlature ſhould tolerate ſuch ſcandalous engagements.

But is it poſſible for you, whilſt a man, to lead a life of continual ſelf-denial and mortification? to have almoſt the moſt ſevere duties to perform? to be conſtantly on your guard with thoſe whom you ſo ſincerely love? no, no, my amiable friend; happy is he who in this life can make one ſingle ſacrifice to virtue. I have one in view, worthy of a man who has ſtruggled and ſuffered in its cauſe. If I do not preſume too far, the happineſs I have ventured to deſign for you, will repay every obligation of my heart, and be even greater than you would have enjoyed, had providence favoured our firſt inclinations. As I cannot make you an angel myſelf, I would unite you to one who would be the guardian of your heart, who will refine it, re-animate it to virtue, and under whoſe auſpices you may ſecurely live with us in this peaceful retreat of angelic innocence. You will not, I conceive, be under much difficulty to gueſs who it is I mean, as it is an object which has already got footing in the heart which it will one day entirely poſſeſs, if my project does not prove abortive.

I foreſee all the difficulties attending it, without being diſcouraged, as the deſign is virtuous. I know the influence I have over my fair friend, and think I ſhall not abuſe it by exerting my power in your favour. But you are acquainted with her reſolutions; and before I attempt to alter them, I ought to be well aſſured of your ſentiments, that while I am endeavouring to prevail on her to permit your addreſſes, I may be able to anſwer for your love and gratitude; for, if the inequality which fortune has made between

between you deprives you of the privilege of making ſuch a propoſal yourſelf, it is ſtill more improper that this privilege ſhould be granted before we know how you will receive it.

I am not unacquainted with your delicacy; and know, that if you have any objections to make, they will reſpect her rather than yourſelf. But baniſh your idle ſcruples. Do you think you can be more tenacious of my friend's reputation, than I am? No, however dear you are to me, you need not be apprehenſive leſt I ſhould prefer your intereſt to her honour. But as I value the eſteem of people of ſenſe, ſo I deſpiſe the prejudices and inconſiderate cenſures of the multitude, who are ever led by the falſe glare of things, and are ſtrangers to real virtue. Were the difference in point of fortune between you a hundred times greater than it is, there is no rank in life to which great talents and good behaviour have not a right to aſpire: and what pretenſions can a woman have to diſdain to make that man her huſband, whom ſhe is proud to number among her friends? You know the ſentiments of us both in theſe matters. A falſe modeſty, and the fear of cenſure, lead to more bad actions than good ones; for virtue never bluſhes at any thing but vice.

As to yourſelf, that pride which I have ſometime remarked in you cannot be exerted with greater impropriety than on this occaſion; and it would be a kind of ingratitude in you to receive from her, reluctantly, one favour more. Beſides, however nice and difficult you may be in this point, you muſt own it is more agreeable, and has a much better look, for a man to

be

be indebted for his fortune to his wife than to a friend; as he becomes a protector of the one, and is protected by the other; and as nothing can be more true, than that a virtuous man cannot have a better friend than his wife.

If, after all, there remain in the bottom of your heart any repugnance to enter into new love-engagements, you cannot too ſpeedily ſuppreſs them, both for your own honour and my repoſe: for I ſhall never be ſatisfied with either you or myſelf till you really become what you ought to be, and take pleaſure in what your duty requires. Ought not I, my friend, to be leſs apprehenſive of ſuch a repugnance to new engagements, than of inclinations too relative to the old? what have I not done with regard to you, to diſcharge my duty? I have even exceeded my promiſes. Do I not even give you an Julia? will you not poſſeſs the better half of myſelf, and be ſtill dearer to the other? With what pleaſure ſhall I not indulge myſelf, after ſuch a connection, in my attachment to you! yes, accompliſh to her thoſe vows you made to me, and let your heart fulfil with her all our former engagements. May it, if poſſible, give to her's all it owes to mine. O St Preux! to her I transfer that ancient debt. Remember it is not eaſily to be diſcharged.

Such, my friend, is the ſcheme I have projected to reunite you to us without danger; in giving you the ſame place in our family which you already hold in our hearts, attached by the moſt dear and ſacred connections, we ſhall live together, ſiſters and brothers; you no longer your own enemy, nor ours. The warmeſt ſen-

timents, when legitimate, are not dangerous. When we are no longer under the neceſſity of ſuppreſſing them, they cannot excite our apprehenſions. So far indeed from endeavouring to ſuppreſs ſentiments ſo innocent and delightful, we ſhould make them at once both our pleaſure and our duty. We ſhould then love each other with the pureſt affection, and ſhould enjoy the united charms of friendſhip, love, and innocence. And, if in executing the charge you have taken upon yourſelf, heaven ſhould recompenſe the care you take of our children, by bleſſing you with children of your own, you will then know from experience how to eſtimate the ſervice you have done us. Endowed with the greateſt bleſſings of which human nature is capable, you will learn to ſupport with pleaſure the agreeable burden of a life uſeful to your friends and relations; you will, in ſhort, perceive to be true what the vain philoſophy of the vicious could never believe; that happineſs is even in this world the reward of the virtuous.

Reflect at leiſure on my propoſal; not however to determine whether it ſuits you; I require not your anſwer on that point; but whether it is proper for Mrs Orbe, and whether you can make her as happy as ſhe ought to make you. You know in what manner ſhe has diſcharged her duty in every ſtation of her ſex. Judge by what ſhe is, what ſhe has a right to expect. She is as capable of love as Julia, and ſhould be loved in the ſame degree. If you think you can deſerve her, ſpeak; my friendſhip will try to effect ſuch an union, and, from her's,

her's, flatters itſelf with ſucceſs. But, if my hopes are deceived in you, you are at leaſt a man of honour and probity, and are not unacquainted with her delicacy; you would not covet happineſs at the expence of her felicity: let your heart be worthy of her, or never let it be offered.

Once more, I ſay, conſult your own heart; conſider well of your anſwer before you ſend it. In matters relative to the happineſs of one's whole life, common prudence will not permit us to determine without great deliberation; but, in an affair where our whole ſoul, our happineſs both here and hereafter, is at ſtake, even to deliberate lightly would be a crime. Call to your aid, therefore, my good friend, all the dictates of true wiſdom; nor will I be aſhamed to put you in mind of thoſe which are moſt eſſential. You do not want religion: I am afraid, however, you do not draw from it all the advantage which your conduct might receive from its precepts, but that your philoſophical pride elevates you above true Chriſtian ſimplicity. In particular, your notions of prayer are by no means conſiſtent with mine. In your opinion, that act of humiliation is of no uſe to us. God having implanted in every man's conſcience all that is neceſſary to direct him aright, has afterwards left him to himſelf, a free agent, to act as he pleaſes. But you well know this is not the doctrine of St Paul, nor that which is profeſſed in our church. We are free agents, it is true; but we are by nature ignorant, weak, and prone to evil: of whom then ſhall we acquire ſtrength and knowledge, but of the Source of all power

and wiſdom? and how ſhall we obtain them, if we are not humble enough to aſk? Take care, my friend, that to the ſublime ideas you entertain of the ſupreme Being, human pride doth not annex the abject notions, which belong only to man. Can you think the Deity wants ſuch arts as are neceſſary to human underſtanding, or that he lies under the neceſſity of generaliſing his ideas to comprehend them the more readily? According to your notions of things, Providence would be under an embarraſſment to take care of individuals. You ſeem to be afraid that a conſtant attention to a diverſity of objects muſt perplex and fatigue Infinite Wiſdom, and to think that it can act better by general than particular laws; doubtleſs, becauſe this ſeems eaſier for the Almighty. The Deity is highly obliged to ſuch great philoſophers for furniſhing him with convenient means of action, to eaſe him of his labour.

But why ſhould we aſk any thing of him? ſay you: is he not acquainted with our wants? is he not a Father that provides for his children? do we know better than he what is needful for us, or are we more deſirous of happineſs than he is that we ſhould be happy? This, my dear St Preux, is all ſophiſtry. The greateſt of our wants, even the only one we have no remedy for, is that of being inſenſible of them; and the firſt ſtep to relief, is the knowledge of our neceſſities. To be wiſe, we muſt be humble; in the ſenſibility of our weakneſs we become ſtrong. Thus juſtice is united to clemency; thus grace and liberty triumph together. Slaves by our weakneſs, we are ſet free by prayer: for it depends

pends on us to ſeek and obtain favour; but the power to do this, depends not on ourſelves.

Learn then not always to depend on your own ſagacity on difficult occaſions; but on that Being whoſe omnipotence is equal to his wiſdom, and who knows how to direct us in every thing right. The greateſt defect in human wiſdom, even in that which has only virtue for its object, is a too great confidence, which makes us judge by the preſent of the future, and of our whole lives from the experience of a ſingle moment. We perceive ourſelves reſolute one inſtant, and therefore conclude we ſhall always be ſo. Puſt up with that pride, which is nevertheleſs mortified by daily experience, we think we are under no danger of falling into a ſnare which we have once eſcaped. The modeſt language of true fortitude is, *I had reſolution, it is true, on this or that occaſion:* but he who boaſts of his preſent ſecurity knows not how weak he may prove on the next trial; and, relying on his borrowed ſtrength as if it were his own, deſerves to feel the want of it when he ſtands in moſt need of aſſiſtance.

How vain are all our projects, how abſurd our reaſonings, in the eyes of that Being, who is not confined to time or ſpace! Man is ſo weak, as to diſregard things which are placed at a diſtance from him: he ſees only the objects which immediately ſurround him; changes his notions of things as the point of ſight is changed from whence he views them. We judge of the future from what agrees with us now, without knowing how far that which pleaſes to-day may be diſagreeable to-morrow: we depend on our-

ſelves, as if we were always the ſame, and yet are changing every hour. Who can tell if they ſhall always deſire what they now wiſh for? if they ſhall be to-morrow what they are to-day, if external objects, and even a change in the conſtitution of the body, may not vary the modification of their minds, and if we may not be made miſerable by the very means we have concerted for our happineſs! Shew me the fixed and certain rule of human wiſdom, and I will take it for my guide. But if the beſt leſſon it can teach us is, to diſtruſt our own ſtrength, let us have recourſe to that ſuperior wiſdom which cannot deceive us, and follow thoſe dictates which cannot lead us aſtray. It is that wiſdom I implore to enlighten my underſtanding to adviſe you; do you implore the ſame to direct your reſolutions? Whatever theſe be, I well know you will take no ſtep which does not at preſent appear honourable and juſt: but this is not enough, it is neceſſary you ſhould take ſuch as will be always ſo; and of the means to do this neither you nor I are of ourſelves competent judges.

LETTER CLVII.

ANSWER.

IS it poſſible! A letter from Julia!—after ſeven years ſilence!—Yes, it is her writing; I ſee, I feel it: can my eyes be a ſtranger to characters which my heart can never forget? What! and do you ſtill remember my name?

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do you ſtill know how to write it? does not your hand tremble as your pen forms the letters? Alas! Julia! whither have you hurried my wandering thoughts? the form, the fold, the ſeal, the ſuperſcription of your letter call to my mind thoſe very different epiſtles which love uſed to dictate. In this the heart and hand ſeem to be in oppoſition to each other. Ought the ſame hand-writing to be employed in conveying ſentiments ſo very different?

Perhaps you will imagine that my thinking ſo much of your former letters too evidently juſtifies the ſuggeſtions of your laſt. But you are miſtaken. I plainly perceive that I am changed, and that you are no longer the ſame; and what proves it to me the moſt is, that except your beauty and goodneſs, every thing I ſee in you now is a new ſubject of admiration. This remark may anticipate your aſſurance. I rely not on my own ſtrength, but on the ſentiment which makes it unneceſſary. Inſpired with every thing which I ought to honour in her whom I have ceaſed to adore, I know into what degree of reſpect my former homage ought to be converted. Penetrated with the moſt lively gratitude, it is true, I love you as much as ever; but I eſteem and honour you moſt for the recovery of my reaſon.

Ever ſince the diſcerning and judicious Wolmar has diſcovered my real ſentiments, I have acquired a better knowledge of myſelf, and am leſs alarmed at my weakneſs. Let it deceive my imagination as it will, the deluſion will be ſtill agreeable; it is ſufficient that it can no longer

er offend you, and that my ideal errors ſerve in the end to preſerve me from real danger.

O Julia! there are impreſſions, which neither time, circumſtance, nor reaſon can efface. The wound may heal, but the ſcar will remain, an honourable mark that preſerves the heart from any other wound. Love and inconſtancy are incompatible; when a lover is fickle, he ceaſes to be a lover. For my part, I am no longer a lover; but, in ceaſing to adore you as ſuch, I remain under your protection. I am no longer apprehenſive of danger from you, but then you prevent my apprehenſions from others. No, reſpectable Julia, you ſhall never ſee in me any other than a friend to your perſon and a lover only of your virtues: but our love, our firſt, our matchleſs love, ſhall never be rooted out of my heart. The remembrance of the flower of my age ſhall never be thus tarniſhed: for, were I to live whole centuries, thoſe happy hours of my youth will never return, nor be baniſhed from my memory. We may, it is true, be no longer the ſame; but I ſhall never forget what we have been.——But let us come now to your couſin.

I cannot help confeſſing, my dear friend, that ſince I have no longer dared to contemplate your charms, I have become more ſenſible to her's. What eyes could be perpetually ſtraying from beauty to beauty without fixing their admiration on either! mine have lately gazed on her's perhaps with too much pleaſure; and I muſt own, that her charms, before imprinted on my heart, have during my abſence made a deeper impreſſion. The ſanctuary of my heart is ſhut up; but

but her image is in the temple. I gradually become to her what I might have been at firſt, had I never beheld you; and it was in your power only to make me ſenſible of the difference between what I feel for her and the love I had for you. My ſenſes, releaſed from that terrible paſſion, embrace the delightful ſentiments of friendſhip. But muſt love be the reſult of this union? Ah, Julia! what difference! where is the enthuſiaſm? the adoration? where are thoſe divine tranſports, thoſe diſtractions, a hundred times more ſublime, more delightful, more forcible than reaſon itſelf? a ſlight warmth, a momentary delirium, ſeize me, affect me a while, and then vaniſh. In your couſin and me I ſee two friends who have a tender regard for each other, and confeſs it. But have lovers a *regard* for each other? No, *you* and *I* are two words prohibited in the lover's language. Two lovers are not two perſons, but one.

Is my heart then really at eaſe? How can it be ſo? She is charming, ſhe is both your friend and mine: I am attached to her by gratitude, and think of her in the moſt delightful moments of reflection. How many obligations are hence conferred on a ſuſceptible mind, and how is it poſſible to ſeparate the tendereſt ſentiments from thoſe to which ſhe has ſuch an undoubted right! Alas! it is decreed, that, between you and her, my heart will never enjoy one peaceful moment!

O women, women! dear and fatal objects! whom nature has made beautiful for our torment, who puniſh us when we brave your power, who purſue when we dread your charms; whoſe love and hate are equally deſtructive;

and

and whom we can neither approach nor fly with impunity! Beauty, charm, ſympathy! inconceivable being, or chimera! ſource of pain and pleaſure! beauty, more terrible to mortals than the element to which the birth of your goddeſs is aſcribed! it is thou who doſt create thoſe tempeſts which are ſo deſtructive to mankind. How dearly, Julia! how dearly, Clara! do I purchaſe your cruel friendſhip!

I have lived in a tempeſt, and it is you who have always raiſed it: but how different are the agitations which you ſeparately excite! different as the waves of the lake of Geneva from thoſe of the Atlantic ocean. The firſt are ſhort and quick, and by their conſtant agitation are often fatal to the ſmall barks that ride without making way on their ſurface: but on the ocean, calm and mild in appearance, we find ourſelves mounted aloft, and ſoftly borne forward to a vaſt diſtance on waves, whoſe motions are ſlow and almoſt imperceptible. We think we ſcarce move from the place, and arrive at the fartheſt parts of the globe.

Such is, in fact, the difference between the effects which your charms and her's have on my heart. That firſt unequalled paſſion, which determined the deſtiny of my life, and which nothing could conquer but itſelf, had its birth before I was ſenſible of its generation; it hurried me on before I knew where I was, and involved me in irrevocable ruin before I believed myſelf led aſtray. While the wind was fair, my labouring bark was every moment alternately ſoaring into the clouds, and plunging into the deep: but I am now becalmed, and know no longer

where

where I am. On the contrary, I ſee, I feel too well how much her preſence affects me, and conceive my danger greater than it really is. I experience ſome ſlight raptures, which are no ſooner felt than gone. I am one moment tranſported with paſſion, and the next peaceful and calm: in vain is the veſſel beaten about by the waves, while there is no wind to fill its ſails: my heart, contented with her real charms, does not exaggerate them: ſhe appears more beautiful to my eyes than to my imagination; and I am more afraid of her when preſent than abſent. Your charms have, on the contrary, had always a very different effect; but at Clarens I alternately experience both.

Since I left it, indeed, the image of our couſin preſents itſelf ſometimes more powerfully to my imagination. Unhappily, however, it never appears alone: it affects me not with love, but with diſquietude.

Theſe are in reality my ſentiments with regard both to the one and the other. All the reſt of your ſex are nothing to me; the pangs I have ſo long ſuffered have baniſhed them entirely from my remembrance;

E fornito 'l mio tempo a mezzo gli anni.

My days elaps'd ere half my years are gone.

Adverſity has ſupplied the place of fortitude, to enable me to conquer nature and triumph over temptation. People in diſtreſs have few deſires, you have taught me to vanquiſh by reſiſting them. An unhappy paſſion is an inſtrument of wiſdom. My heart is become, if I may ſo expreſs

preſs myſelf, the organ of all my wants; for when that is at eaſe, I want nothing. Let not you or your couſin diſturb its tranquillity, and it will for the future be always at reſt.

In this ſituation, what have I to fear from myſelf? and by what cruel precaution would you rob me of happineſs, in order to prevent my being expoſed to loſe it? How capricious is it to have made me fight and conquer, to rob me afterwards of the reward of my victory? Do you not condemn thoſe who brave unneceſſary danger? why then did you recall me at ſo great a hazard, to run ſo many riſks? or why would you baniſh me when I am ſo worthy to remain? Ought you to have permitted your huſband to take the trouble he has done for nothing? Why did you not prevent his taking the pains which you were determined to render fruitleſs? Why did you not ſay to him, *Leave the poor wretch at the other end of the world, or I ſhall certainly tranſport him again?* Alas! the more afraid you are of me, the ſooner you ought to recall me home. It is not in your preſence I am in danger, but in your abſence; and I dread the power of your charms only where you are not. When the formidable Julia purſues me, I fly for refuge to Mrs Wolmar, and I am ſecure: whither ſhall I fly, if you deprive me of that aſylum? All times and places are dangerous while ſhe is abſent; for in every place I find either Clara or Julia. In reflecting on the time paſt, in meditating on the preſent, the one and the other alternately agitate my heart; and thus my reſtleſs imagination becomes tranquil only in your preſence, and it is with you only I find ſecu-

ſecurity againſt myſelf. How ſhall I explain to you the change I perceive in approaching you? You have always exerted the ſame ſovereign power; but its effects are now different from what they were: in ſuppreſſing the tranſports you once inſpired, your empire is more noble and ſublime; a peaceful ſerenity has ſucceeded to the ſtorm of the paſſions; my heart, modelled by yours, loves in the ſame manner, and becomes tranquil by your example. But in this tranſitory repoſe I enjoy only a ſhort truce with the paſſions; and, tho' I am exalted to the perfection of angels in your preſence, I no ſooner forſake you than I fall into my native meanneſs. Yes, Julia, I am apt ſometimes to think I have two ſouls, and that the good one is depoſited in your hands. Ah! why do you ſeek to ſeparate me from it?

But you are fearful of the conſequences of youthful deſires, extinguiſhed only by trouble and adverſity. You are afraid for the young women who are in your houſe and under your protection. You are afraid of that which the prudent Wolmar was not afraid of. How mortifying to me are ſuch apprehenſions! do you then eſteem your friend leſs than the meaneſt of your ſervants? I can, however, forgive your thinking ill of me; but never your not paying yourſelf that reſpect which is ſo juſtly your due. No, Julia, the flame with which I once burnt has purified my heart; and I am no longer actuated like other men. After what I have been, ſhould I ſo debaſe myſelf tho' but for a moment, I would hide myſelf in the remoteſt corner of

the earth, and ſhould never think myſelf too far removed from Julia.

What! could I diſturb that peaceful order and domeſtic tranquillity, in which I take ſo much pleaſure? could I fully that ſweet retreat of innocence and peace, wherein I have dwelt with ſo much honour? could I be ſo baſe as——No, the moſt debauched, the moſt abandoned, of men would be affected with ſo charming a picture. He could not fail of being enamoured with virtue in this aſylum. So far from carrying hither his licentious manners, he would betake himſelf thither to caſt them off. Could I then, Julia, be capable of what you inſinuate? and that under your own eyes? no, my dear friend, open your doors to me without ſcruple; your manſion is to me the temple of virtue; its ſacred image ſtrikes me in every part of it, and binds me to its ſervice. I am not indeed an angel; but I ſhall dwell in the habitation of angels, and will imitate their example. Thoſe who would not wiſh to reſemble them, will never ſeek their company.

You ſee it is with difficulty I come to the chief object of your laſt letter; that which I ſhould have firſt and moſt maturely conſidered, and which only ſhould now engage my thoughts if I could pretend to the happineſs propoſed to me. O Julia, benevolent and incomparable friend! in offering me thus your other half, the moſt valuable preſent in the univerſe next to yourſelf, you do more for me if poſſible than ever you have done before. A blind ungovernable paſſion might have prevailed on you to give me yourſelf; but to give me your friend is the

ſincereſt proof of your eſteem. From this moment I begin to think myſelf, indeed, a man of real merit, ſince I am thus diſtinguiſhed. But how cruel, at the ſame time, is this proof of it! In accepting your offer, I ſhould bely my heart; and to deſerve, muſt refuſe it. You know me, and may judge.

It is not enough that your charming couſin ſhould engage my affections; I know ſhe ſhould be loved as you are. But will it, can it be?. or does it depend on me to do her that juſtice, in this particular, which is her due? Alas! if you intended ever to unite me to her, why did you not leave me a heart to give her; a heart which ſhe might have inſpired with new ſentiments, and which in turn might have offered her the firſt-fruits of love! I ought to have a heart at eaſe and at liberty, ſuch as was that of the prudent and worthy Orbe, to love her only as he did. I ought to be as deſerving as he was, in order to ſucceed him: otherwiſe the compariſon between her former and preſent ſituation will only ſerve to render the latter leſs ſupportable; the cold and divided love of a ſecond huſband, ſo far from conſoling her for the loſs of the firſt, will but make her regret him the more. By her union with me, ſhe will only convert a tender grateful friend into a common huſband. Will ſhe gain by ſuch an exchange? ſhe will be doubly a loſer by it; her ſuſceptible mind will ſeverely feel its loſs; and how ſhall I ſupport a continual ſadneſs, of which I am the cauſe, and which I cannot remove? In ſuch a ſituation, alas! her grief would be firſt fatal to me. No, Julia, I can never be happy

at the expence of her eaſe. I love her too well to marry her.

Be happy! No, can I be happy without making her ſo? Can either of the parties be ſeparately happy or miſerable in marriage? are not their pleaſures and pains, common to both? and does not the chagrin which one gives to the other always rebound on the perſon who cauſed it? I ſhould be made miſerable by her afflictions, without being made happy by her goodneſs. Beauty, fortune, merit, love, all might conſpire to inſure my felicity! but my heart, my froward heart, would counterwork them all; would poiſon the ſource of my delights, and make me miſerable in the very midſt of felicity.

In my preſent ſituation, I take pleaſure in her company: but if I ſhould attempt to augment that pleaſure by a cloſer union, I ſhall deprive myſelf of the moſt agreeable moments of my life. Her turn for humour and gaiety may give an amorous caſt to her friendſhip, but this is only whilſt there are witneſſes to her favours. I may alſo feel too lively an emotion for her; but it is only when by your preſence you have baniſhed every tender ſentiment for Julia. When ſhe and I are by ourſelves, it is you only who render our converſation agreeable. The more our attachment increaſes, the more we think on the ſource from which it ſprung; the ties of friendſhip are drawn cloſer, and we love each other but to talk of you. Hence ariſe a thouſand pleaſing reflections, pleaſing to Clara, and more ſo to me, all which a cloſer union would infallibly deſtroy. Will not ſuch reflections,

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in that caſe too delightful, be a kind of infidelity to her? and with what face can I make a beloved and reſpectable wife the confident of thoſe infidelities of which my heart, in ſpite of me, would be guilty? This heart could no longer transfuſe itſelf into her's. No longer daring to talk of you, I ſhould ſoon forbear to ſpeak at all. Honour and duty impoſing on me a new reſerve, would thus eſtrange me from the wife of my boſom, and I ſhould have no longer a guide or a counſellor to direct my ſteps or correct my errors. Is this the homage ſhe has a right to expect from me? is this that tribute of gratitude and tenderneſs which I ought to pay to her? is it thus that I am to make her and myſelf happy!

Is it poſſible that Julia can have forgotten our mutual vows? for my part, I never can forget them. I have loſt all, except my ſincerity, and that I will preſerve inviolate to my laſt hour. As I could not live for you, I will die unmarried. Nay, had I not already made ſuch a promiſe to myſelf, I would do it now. For though it be a duty to marry, it is yet a more indiſpenſible one not to make any perſon unhappy; and all the ſentiments ſuch a contract would now excite in me, would be mixed with the conſtant regret of that which I once vainly hoped for: a regret which would at once be my torment, and that of her who ſhould be unfortunate enough to be my wife. I ſhould require of her thoſe days of bliſs which I expected with you. How ſhould I ſupport the compariſon! what woman in the world could bear that? Ah, no, I could never endure the thoughts of being at once deprived

of you, and deſtined to be the huſband of another.

Seek not then, my dear friend, to ſhake thoſe reſolutions on which depends the repoſe of my life; ſeek not to recall me out of that ſtate of annihilation into which I am fallen; leſt, in bringing me back to a ſenſe of my exiſtence, my wounds ſhould bleed afreſh, and I ſhould again ſink under a load of misfortunes. Since my return, I perceived how deeply I became intereſted in whatever concerned your charming friend; but I was not alarmed at it, as I knew the ſituation of my heart would never permit me to be too ſolicitous. Indeed I was not diſpleaſed with an emotion, which, while it added ſoftneſs to the attachment I always had for Clara, would aſſiſt in diverting my thoughts from a more dangerous object, and enable me to ſupport your preſence with greater confidence. This emotion has ſomething in it of the pleaſure of love, without any of its pains. The calm delight I take in ſeeing her is not diſturbed by the reſtleſs deſire of poſſeſſing her: contented to paſs my whole life in the manner I paſſed the laſt winter, I find between you both that peaceful and agreeable ſituation *, which tempers the auſterity of virtue, and renders its leſſons amiable. If a vain tranſport affects me for a moment, every thing conſpires to ſuppreſs it; and I have too effectually vanquiſhed thoſe infinitely more

* This is a direct contradiction to what he aſſerted before. The poor philoſopher ſeems to be in a droll dilemma between two pretty women. One might be apt to think he choſe to make love to neither, that he might the better love them both.

more impetuous and dangerous emotions to fear any thing that can aſſail me now. I honour your friend no leſs than I love her, and that is ſaying every thing. But ſhould I conſult only my own intereſt, the rights of the tendereſt friendſhip are too valuable, to riſque their loſs, by endeavouring to extend them: and I need not even think of the reſpect which is her due, to prevent my ever ſaying a ſingle word in private converſation which would require interpretation, or which ſhe ought not to underſtand. She may perhaps have ſometimes remarked a little too much ſolicitude in my behaviour towards her; but ſhe has ſurely never obſerved in my heart any deſire to expreſs it. Such as I was for ſix months paſt, ſuch would I be with regard to her as long as I live. I know none who approach you, ſo perfect as ſhe is; but were ſhe even more perfect than yourſelf, I feel, that after having been your lover I ſhould never have become her's.

Before I conclude this letter, I muſt give you my opinion of yours. Yes, Julia, with all your prudence and virtue, I can diſcover in it the ſcruples of a timorous mind, which thinks it a duty to frighten itſelf; and conceives its ſecurity lies in being afraid. This extreme timidity is as dangerous as exceſſive confidence. In conſtantly repreſenting to us imaginary monſters, it waſtes our ſtrength by combating chimeras, and, by terrifying us without cauſe, makes us leſs on our guard againſt real dangers, as well as leſs capable of diſcerning them. Read over again, now and then, the letter which Lord B—— wrote to you laſt year, on the ſubject of your huſ-

huſband; you will find in it ſome good advice that may be of ſervice to you in many reſpects. I do not diſcommend your devotion; it is affecting, amiable, and like yourſelf; it is ſuch as even your huſband ſhould be pleaſed with. But take care, leſt timidity and precaution lead you to quietiſm; and leſt by repreſenting to yourſelf danger on every ſide, you are induced at length to confide in nothing. Do not you know, my dear friend, that a ſtate of virtue is a ſtate of warfare? Let us employ our thoughts leſs on the dangers which threaten us, than on ourſelves; that we may always be prepared to withſtand temptation. If to run in the way of temptation is to deſerve to fall, to ſhun it with too much ſolicitude is often to fly from the opportunities of diſcharging the nobleſt duties; it is not good to be always thinking of temptations, even with a view to avoid them. I ſhall never ſeek temptation; but in whatever ſituation Providence may place me for the future, the eight months I paſſed at Clarens will be my ſecurity; nor ſhall I be afraid that any one will rob me of the prize you taught me to deſerve. I ſhall never be weaker than I have been, nor ſhall ever have greater temptations to reſiſt. I have felt the bitterneſs of remorſe, and I have taſted the ſweets of victory, after all which I need not heſitate a moment in making my choice; every circumſtance of my paſt life, even my errors, being a ſecurity for my future behaviour.

I ſhall not pretend to enter with you into any new or profound diſquiſitions, concerning the order of the univerſe, and the government of thoſe beings of which it is compoſed: it will be ſuf-

ſufficient for me to ſay, that in matters ſo far above human comprehenſion there is no other way of rightly judging of things inviſible, but by induction from thoſe which are viſible; and that all analogy makes for thoſe general laws which you ſeem to reject. The moſt rational ideas we can form of the Supreme Being confirm this opinion; for, although Omnipotence lies under no neceſſity of adopting methods to abridge his labour, it is nevertheleſs worthy of Supreme Wiſdom to prefer the moſt ſimple modes of action, that there may be nothing uſeleſs either in cauſe or effect. In the formation of man, he endowed him with all the neceſſary faculties to accompliſh what ſhould be required of him; and when we aſk of him the power to do good, we aſk nothing of him but what he has already given us. He has given us underſtanding to know what is good, a heart to love *, and liberty to make choice of it. It is in theſe ſublime gifts, therefore, that divine grace conſiſts; and as we have all received it, we are all accountable for its effects.

I have heard, in my time, a good deal of argument againſt the free agency of man, and deſpiſe all its ſophiſtry. A caſuiſt may take what pains he will to prove that I am no free agent; my innate ſenſe of freedom conſtantly deſtroys his arguments; for whatever choice I make after deliberation, I feel plainly that it depended

* St Preux ſuppoſes moral conſcience to depend on ſentiment, not on judgment; which is contrary to the opinion of the philoſophers. I am apt to think however that he is in the right.

pended only on myſelf to have made the contrary. Indeed all the ſcholaſtic ſubtilties I have heard on this head are futile and frivolous; becauſe they prove too much, are equally uſed to oppoſe truth and falſehood, and, whether man be a free agent or not, ſerve equally to prove one or the other. With theſe kind of reaſoners, the Deity himſelf is not a free agent; and the word *liberty* is in fact a term of no meaning. They triumph, not in having ſolved the difficulty, but in having ſubſtituted a chimera in its room. They begin by ſuppoſing that every intelligent being is merely paſſive, and from that ſuppoſition deduce conſequences to prove its inactivity: a very convenient method of argumentation truly! If they accuſe their adverſaries of reaſoning in this manner, they do us injuſtice. We do not *ſuppoſe* ourſelves free and active beings: we feel that we are ſo. It belongs to them to ſhew, not only that this ſentiment may deceive us, but that it really does ſo *. The biſhop of Cloyne has demonſtrated, that, without any diverſity in appearances, body or matter may have no abſolute exiſtence; but is this enough to induce us to affirm that it abſolutely has no exiſtence? In all this, the mere phenomenon would coſt more trouble than the reality; and I will always hold by that which appears the moſt ſimple.

I do not believe, therefore, that after having provided in every ſhape for the wants of man in his formation, God intereſts himſelf in an extraor-

* This is not the matter in diſpute. It is to know whether the will be determined without a cauſe, or what is the cauſe that determines the will.

traordinary manner for one perſon more than another. Thoſe who abuſe the common aids of Providence, are unworthy ſuch aſſiſtance; and thoſe who make good uſe of them, have no occaſion for any other. Such a partiality appears to me injurious to divine juſtice. You will ſay, this ſevere and diſcouraging doctrine may be deduced from the holy Scripture. Be it ſo. Is it not my firſt duty to honour my Creator? In whatever veneration then I hold the ſacred text, I hold its Author in a ſtill greater; and I could ſooner be induced to believe the Bible corrupted or unintelligible, than that God can be malevolent or unjuſt. St Paul would not have the veſſel ſay to the potter who formed it, Why haſt thou formed me thus? This is very well, if the potter ſhould apply it only to ſuch ſervices as he conſtructed it to perform; but if he ſhould cenſure this veſſel as being inadequate to the purpoſe for which it was conſtructed, has it not a right to aſk, Why haſt thou made me thus?

But does it follow from hence that prayer is uſeleſs? God forbid that I ſhould deprive myſelf of that reſource. Every act of the underſtanding which raiſes us to God, carries us above ourſelves; in imploring his aſſiſtance, we learn to experience it. It is not his immediate act that operates on us, it is we that improve ourſelves by raiſing our thoughts in prayer to him. All that we aſk aright, he beſtows; and, as you obſerve, we acquire ſtrength in confeſſing our weakneſs. But if we abuſe this ordinance, and turn myſtics; inſtead of raiſing ourſelves to God, we are loſt in our own wild imaginations; in

in ſeeking grace, we renounce reaſon; in order to obtain of heaven one bleſſing, we trample under foot another; and in obſtinately perſiſting that heaven ſhould enlighten our hearts, we extinguiſh the light of our underſtandings. But who are we that ſhould inſiſt on the Deity's performing miracles, when we pleaſe, in our favour?

You know very well, there is no good thing that may not be carried into a blameable exceſs; even devotion itſelf, when it degenerates into the madneſs of enthuſiaſm. Yours is too pure ever to arrive at this exceſs; but you have reaſon to be on your guard againſt a leſs degree of it. I have heard you often cenſure the ecſtaſies of the pietiſts *: but do you know from whence they ariſe? from allotting a longer time to prayer than is conſiſtent with the weakneſs of human nature. Hence the ſpirits are exhauſted, the imagination takes fire, they ſee viſions, they become inſpired and prophetical; nor is it then in the power of the underſtanding to ſtop the progreſs of fanaticiſm. Now, you ſhut yourſelf frequently in your cloſet, and are conſtant in prayer. You do not indeed as yet converſe with pietiſts, but you read their books. Not that I ever cenſured your taſte for the writings of the worthy Fenelon: but what have you to do with thoſe of his diſciple? You read Mu-

* A ſort of enthuſiaſts that take it into their heads to follow the goſpel ſtrictly according to the letter; in the manner of the methodiſts in England, the Moravians in Germany, and the Janſeniſts in France; excepting, however, that the latter want only to be maſters, to be more ſevere and perſecuting than their enemies.

Muralt. I indeed read him too; but I make choice of his Letters, you of his Divine Inſtinct. But remark his end, lament the extravagant errors of that ſenſible man, and think of yourſelf. At preſent a pious, a true Chriſtian, beware of becoming a mere devotee.

I receive your counſel, my dear friend, with the docility of a child, and give you mine with the zeal of a father. Since virtue, inſtead of diſſolving our attachments, has rendered them indiſſoluble, the ſame leſſons may be of uſe to both, as the ſame intereſts connect us. Never ſhall our hearts ſpeak to each other, never ſhall our eyes meet without preſenting to both a reſpectable object which ſhall mutually elevate our ſentiments, the perfections of the one reciprocally aſſiſting the other.

But though our deliberations may be common to both, the concluſion is not; it is yours alone to decide. Ceaſe not, then, you who have ever been miſtreſs of my deſtiny, ceaſe not to be ſo ſtill. Weigh my arguments, and pronounce ſentence: whatever you order me to do, I will ſubmit to your direction, and will at leaſt deſerve the continuance of it. Should you think it improper for me to ſee you perſonally again, you will yet be always preſent to my mind, and preſide over my actions. Should you deprive me of the honour of educating your offſpring, you will not deprive me of the virtues which you have inſpired. Theſe are the offſpring of your mind, which mine adopts as its own, and will never bear to have them torn from it.

Speak to me, Julia, freely. And as I have

now been explicit as to what I think and feel on this occaſion, tell me what I muſt do. You know how far my deſtiny is connected with that of my illuſtrious friend. I have not conſulted him on this occaſion; I have neither ſhewn him this letter nor yours. If he ſhould know that you diſapprove his project, or rather that of your huſband, he will reject it himſelf; and I am far from deſigning to deduce from thence any objection to your ſcruples; he only ought to be ignorant of them till you have finally determined. In the mean time, I ſhall find ſome means or other to delay our departure, in which, though they may ſurpriſe him a little, I know he will acquieſce. For my own part, I had rather never ſee you more, than to ſee you only juſt to bid you again adieu: and to live with you as a ſtranger, would be a ſtate of mortification which I have not deſerved.

LETTER CLVIII.

From Mrs WOLMAR.

STRANGE! how your head-ſtrong imagination affrights and bewilders itſelf! and at what, pray? truly at the ſincereſt proofs of my friendſhip and eſteem which you ever experienced; at the peaceful reflections which my ſolicitude for your real happineſs inſpired; at the moſt obliging, the moſt advantageous, and the moſt honourable propoſal that was ever made you; at my deſire, perhaps an indiſcreet one, of uniting you by indiſſoluble ties to our family; at the deſire of

of making a relation, a kinſman of an ingrate, who affects to believe I want to diſcard him as a friend. To remove your preſent uneaſineſs, you need only take what I write in the moſt natural ſenſe the words will bear. But you have long delighted in tormenting yourſelf with falſe conſtructions. Your letters are like your life, ſublime and mean, maſterly and puerile. Ah, my dear philoſopher! will you never ceaſe to be a child.

Where, pray, have you learned that I intended to impoſe on you new laws, to break with you, and ſend you back to the fartheſt part of the world? Do you really find this to be the tenour of my letter? In anticipating the pleaſure of living with you, I was fearful of thoſe inconveniences which I conceived might poſſibly ariſe; therefore endeavoured to remove them, by making your fortune more equal to your merit and the regard I had for you. This is my whole crime; is there any thing in it at which you have reaſon to be alarmed?

Indeed, my friend, you are in the wrong: for you are not ignorant how dear you are to me, and how eaſy it is for you to obtain your wiſh without ſeeking occaſion to torment others or yourſelf.

Be aſſured then, that if your reſidence here is agreeable to you, it will be equally ſo to me; and that nothing Mr Wolmar has done for me gives me greater ſatisfaction than the care he has taken to eſtabliſh you in this houſe. I agree to it with pleaſure, and know we ſhall be uſeful to each other. More ready to liſten to good advice than to ſuggeſt it to ourſelves, we

have both occaſion for a guide: and who can be more ſenſible of the danger of going aſtray than he whoſe return has coſt him ſo dear? what object can better repreſent that danger? After having broken through ſuch connections as once ſubſiſted between us, the remembrance of them ſhould influence us to do nothing unworthy of the virtuous motives which induced us to break them. Yes, I ſhall always think myſelf obliged to make you the witneſs of every action of my life, and to communicate to you every ſentiment with which my heart is inſpired. Ah! my friend! I may be weak before the reſt of the world, but I can anſwer for myſelf in your company.

It is in this delicacy, which always ſurvives true love, and not in Mr Wolmar's ſubtile diſtinctions, that we are to look for the cauſe of that elevation of ſoul and that innate fortitude we experience. Such an explication is at leaſt more natural, and does more honour to our hearts than his, and has a greater tendency to encourage us to virtue, which alone is ſufficient to give it the preference. Hence you may be aſſured, that, ſo far am I from being in ſuch a whimſical diſpoſition as you imagine, that I am juſt the reverſe. In ſo much that, if the project of your returning to reſide here muſt be given up, I ſhall eſteem ſuch an event as a great misfortune to you, to me, to my children, and even to my huſband; on whoſe account alone you know I have many reaſons for deſiring your preſence. But to ſpeak only of my own particular inclination: You remember your firſt arrival. Did I ſhew leſs pleaſure at ſeeing you,

than

than you felt in ſeeing me? has it ever appeared to you that your ſtay at Clarens gave me the leaſt trouble or uneaſineſs? did you think I betrayed the leaſt pleaſure at your departure? muſt I go farther, and ſpeak to you with my uſual freedom; I will frankly confeſs to you then, that the ſix laſt months we paſſed together were the happieſt of my life, and that in that ſhort ſpace of time I taſted all the happineſs of which my ſenſibility has furniſhed me the idea.

Never ſhall I forget one day, in particular, of the paſt winter, when, after having been reading the journal of your voyages and that of your friend's adventures, we ſupped in the Apollo. It was then that, reflecting on the felicity with which Providence had bleſſed me in this world, I looked round and ſaw all my friends about me; my father, my huſband, my children, my couſin, Lord B——, and you, without counting Fanny, who did not caſt the leaſt blemiſh on the ſcene. This little ſaloon, ſaid I to myſelf, contains all that is dear to my heart, and perhaps all that is deſirable in this world. I am here ſurrounded by every thing that intereſts me. The whole univerſe to me is in this little ſpot. I enjoy at once the regard I have for my friends, that which they have for me, and that which they have for each other: their mutual good-will either comes from or relates to me: I ſee nothing but what ſeems to extend my being, and nothing to divide it. I exiſt in a manner in all thoſe who are about me; my imagination can extend no farther: I have nothing more to deſire: to reflect and to be happy is with me the ſame thing: I live at once in all that I love: I

am replete with happineſs, and ſatisfied with life: come, death, when thou wilt! I no longer dread thy power: the meaſure of my life is full, and I have nothing new to experience worth enjoyment.

The greater pleaſure I enjoyed in your company, the more agreeable is it to me to reflect on it, and the more diſquietude alſo hath every thing given me that might duſturb it. We will for a moment lay aſide that timid morality and pretended devotion, with which you reproach me. You muſt confeſs at leaſt that the ſocial pleaſures we taſted ſprung from that openneſs of heart, by which every thought, every ſentiment, of the one was communicated to the other, and from which every one, conſcious of being what he ought, appeared ſuch as he really was. Let us ſuppoſe now any ſecret intrigue, any connection neceſſary to be concealed, any motive of reſerve and ſecreſy intruding on our harmony; that moment the reciprocal pleaſure we felt in ſeeing each other would vaniſh. Shyneſs and reſtraint would enſue; we ſhould no ſooner meet together than we ſhould wiſh to part; and at length circumſpection and decorum would bring on diſtruſt and diſtaſte. It is impoſſible long to love thoſe of whom we are afraid or ſuſpicious. They ſoon become troubleſome——Julia troubleſome!—troubleſome to her friend! no, no, that cannot be; there can be no evils in nature, but ſuch as it is poſſible to ſupport.

In thus freely telling you my ſcruples, I do not pretend, however, to make you change your reſolutions; but to induce you to reconſider the motives on which they are founded; leſt,

leſt, in taking a ſtep, all the conſequences of which you may not foreſee, you might have reaſon to repent at a time when you will not dare to retract it. As to Mr Wolmar's having no fears, it was not his place to fear, but yours. No one is ſo proper a judge of what is to be feared of you, as yourſelf. Conſider the matter well then; and, if nothing is in reality to be feared, tell me ſo, and I ſhall think of it no more: for I know your ſincerity, and never can diſtruſt your intentions. Your heart may be capable of an accidental error; but can never be guilty of a premeditated crime, and this it is that makes the diſtinction between a weak man and a wicked one.

Beſides, though my objections had really more weight than I am inclined to think they have, why muſt things be viewed in their moſt diſadvantageous light? Surely there can be no neceſſity for ſuch extreme precautionary meaſures. It cannot be requiſite that you ſhould break through all your projects, and fly from us for ever. Though young in years, you are poſſeſſed of all the experience of age. The tranquillity of mind which ſucceeds the noble paſſion, is a ſenſation which increaſes by fruition. A ſuſceptible heart may dread a ſtate of repoſe, to which it has been unaccuſtomed; but a little time is ſufficient to reconcile us to our peaceful ſituation, and in a little time more we give it the preference. For my part, I foreſee the hour of your ſecurity to be nearer than you yourſelf imagine. Extremes, you know, never laſt long; you have loved too much not to become in time indifferent: the cinder which is caſt from the furnace

can

can never be lighted again; but before it becomes ſuch, the coal muſt be totally burnt out. Be vigilant but for a few years more, and you will then have nothing to fear.

Your acceptance of my propoſal would at once have removed all danger; but, independent of that view, ſuch an attachment has charms enough to be deſired for its own ſake; and if your delicacy prevents you from cloſing with my propoſals, I have no need to be informed how much ſuch a reſtraint muſt coſt you. At the ſame time, however, I am afraid that the pretences which impoſe on your reaſon, are many of them frivolous: I am afraid, that in piquing yourſelf on the fulfilling of engagements which no longer exiſt, you only make a falſe ſhew of virtue, in a conſtancy for which you are by no means to be commended, and which is at preſent entirely miſplaced. I have already told you, that I think the obſervance of a raſh and criminal vow is an additional crime. If yours were not ſo at firſt, it is become ſo now; and that is ſufficient to annul it. The promiſe which no man ought to break, is that of being always a man of virtue, and reſolute in the diſcharge of his duty; to change when that is changed, is not levity, but conſtancy. Act at all times as virtue requires you to do, and you will never break your word.

If, however, there be among your ſcruples any ſolid objection, we will examine it at leiſure. In the mean time, I am not very ſorry that you did not embrace my ſcheme with the ſame avidity as I formed it; that my blunder, if it be one, may give you leſs pain. I had meditated this

this project during the abſence of my couſin; with whom I have ſince had ſome general converſation on the ſubject of a ſecond marriage, and find her ſo averſe to it, that, in ſpite of the regard which I know ſhe has for you, I am afraid I muſt exert a greater authority than becomes me to overcome her reluctance, for this is a point in which friendſhip ought to reſpect the bent of the inclinations.

I will own, nevertheleſs, that I ſtill abide by my deſign: it would be ſo agreeable to us all, would ſo honourably extricate you from your preſent precarious ſituation in life, would ſo unite all our intereſts, and make ſo natural an obligation of that friendſhip which is ſo delightful to all, that I cannot think of giving it up entirely. No, my friend, you can never be too nearly allied to me; it is not even enough that you might be my couſin, I could wiſh you were my brother.

Whatever may be the conſequence of theſe notions, do more juſtice to my ſentiments for you. Make uſe, without reſerve, of my friendſhip, my confidence, and my eſteem. Remember I ſhall not preſcribe any rules to you; nor do I think I have any reaſon to do it. Deny me not however the privilege of giving you advice, but imagine not I lay you under any commands. If you think you can ſecurely reſide at Clarens, come hither, ſtay here; you cannot give me greater pleaſure: but, if you think a few years longer abſence neceſſary to cure the ſuſpicious remains of impetuous youth, write to me often in your abſence, come and ſee us as often as you will,

will, and let us cultivate a correſpondence founded on the moſt cordial intimacy.

What pains will not ſuch conſolation alleviate? what abſence will not be ſupportable under the pleaſing hope of at laſt ending our days together! I will do yet more; I am ready to put one of my children under your care; I ſhall think him ſafer in your hands than my own; and, when you bring him back, I know not which of you will give me the greater pleaſure by your return. On the other hand, if you become entirely reaſonable, baniſh your chimerical notions, and are willing to deſerve my couſin, come, pay her your beſt reſpects, and make her happy. Come then, and ſurmount every obſtacle that oppoſes your ſucceſs, and make a conqueſt of her heart: ſuch aſſiſtance as my friendſhip can give, ſhall not on my part be wanting. Come, and make each other happy, and nothing more will be wanting to render me completely ſo. But, whatever reſolution you take, after having maturely conſidered the matter, ſpeak confidently, and affront your friend no more by your groundleſs ſuſpicions.

Let me not however, in thinking ſo much of you, forget myſelf. My turn to be heard muſt come at laſt: for you act with your friends in a diſpute, as with your adverſaries at cheſs; you defend yourſelf, by attacking them. You excuſe your being a philoſopher, by accuſing me of being a devotee. I am then, in your opinion a devotee, or ready to become one. Be it ſo; contemptible denominations never change the nature of things. If devotion is commendable, why am I to blame in being devout? But,

perhaps

perhaps that epithet is too low for you. The dignity of the philoſopher diſdains the worſhip of the vulgar: it would ſerve God in a more ſublime manner, and raiſe even to heaven itſelf its pretenſions and its pride. Poor philoſophers!—But to return to myſelf.

I have, from my childhood, reſpected virtue, and have always cultivated my reaſon. I endeavoured to regulate my conduct by human underſtanding and ſentiment, and have been ill conducted. Before you deprive me of the guide I have choſen, give me another on which I may depend. I thought myſelf as wiſe as other people, and yet a thouſand others have lived more prudently than I; they muſt therefore have had reſources which I had not. Why is it that I, knowing myſelf well born, have had reaſon to conceal my life and converſation from the world? why did I hate the ſin which I committed even in ſpite of myſelf? I thought I knew my own ſtrength; I relied on it, and was deceived. All the reſiſtance which was in my own power, I think, I made; and yet I fell.—How muſt thoſe have done who have eſcaped? they muſt have had a better ſupport.

From their example I was induced to ſeek the ſame ſupport, and have found in it a peculiar advantage which I did not expect. During the reign of the paſſions, they themſelves contribute to the continuance of the anxieties they at firſt occaſion; they retain hope always by the ſide of deſire, and hence we are enabled to ſupport the abſence of felicity: if our expectations are diſappointed, hope ſupplies its place; and the agreeable deluſion laſts as long as the paſſion which

which gave it birth. Thus, in a ſituation of this kind, paſſion ſupports itſelf, and the very ſolicitude it cauſes is a chimerical pleaſure which is ſubſtituted for real enjoyment. Nay more, thoſe who have no deſires muſt be very unhappy; they are deprived, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, of all they poſſeſs. We enjoy leſs that which we obtain than that which we hope for, and are ſeldom happy but in expectation. In fact, man, made to deſire every thing and obtain little, of boundleſs avarice, yet narrow capacity, has received of heaven a conſolatory aid, which brings to him in idea every thing he deſires, diſplays it to his imagination, repreſents it to his view, and in one ſenſe makes it his own; but to render ſuch imaginary property ſtill more flattering and agreeable, it is even modified to his paſſion. But this ſhadow vaniſhes the moment the real object appears; the imagination can no longer magnify that which we actually poſſeſs; the charms of illuſion ceaſe, where thoſe of enjoyment begin. The world of fancy, therefore, the land of chimeras, is the only world worthy to be inhabited; and ſuch is the inanity of human enjoyments, that, except that Being who is ſelf-exiſtent, there is nothing delightful but that which has no exiſtence at all.

If this effect does not always follow in the particular objects of our paſſions, it is infallible in the common ſentiment which includes the whole. To live without pain is incompatible with our ſtate of mortality: it would be in fact to die. He who has every thing in his power, if a creature, muſt be miſerable, as he would be

be deprived of the pleaſure of deſiring; than which every other want would be more ſupportable *.

This is indeed what I have in part experienced ſince my marriage and your return. Every thing around me gives me cauſe of content, and yet I am not contented. A ſecret languor ſteals into the bottom of my heart: I find it puffed up and void, as you formerly ſaid was the caſe with yours; all my attachments are not ſufficient to fill it. This diſquietude, I confeſs, is ſtrange: but it is nevertheleſs true. O my friend! I am indeed too happy: my happineſs is a burden to me.

Can you think of a remedy for this diſguſt? For my part, I muſt own, that a ſentiment ſo unreaſonable and ſo involuntary, has in a great meaſure diminiſhed the value of life, and I cannot imagine what bleſſings it can beſtow which I want, or with which I ſhould be ſatisfied. Can any woman be more ſuſceptible than I am? Can ſhe love her father, her huſband, her children, her friends, her relations better than I do? Can ſhe be more generally beloved? can ſhe lead a life more agreeable to her taſte? or can ſhe be more at liberty to exchange it for any other? Can ſhe enjoy better health? Can ſhe have more expedients to divert her, or ſtronger ties to bind her to the world? and yet, notwithſtand-

* Hence it is that every ſovereign who aſpires to be deſpotic, aſpires to the honour of being miſerable. In every kingdom in the world, would you ſee the man who is the moſt unhappy of all his countrymen, go directly to the ſovereign, particularly if he be an abſolute monarch.

ſtanding all this, I am conſtantly uneaſy; my heart ſighs after ſomething of which it is entirely ignorant.

Therefore, finding nothing in this globe capable of giving it ſatisfaction, my deſiring ſoul ſeeks an object in another world; in elevating itſelf to the ſource of ſentiment and exiſtence, its languor vaniſhes; it is re-animated, it acquires new ſtrength and new life. It thence obtains a new exiſtence, independent of corporeal paſſions; or rather, it exiſts no longer in me, but in the immenſity of the Supreme Being; and, diſencumbered for a while from its terreſtrial ſhackles, returns to them again with patience, conſoled with the expectation of futurity.

You ſmile at all this, my good friend; I underſtand you. I have indeed pronounced my own condemnation, having formerly cenſured the heart which I now approve. To this I have only one word to anſwer; and that is, I then ſpoke without experience. I do not pretend to juſtify it in every ſhape. I do not pretend to ſay, this viſionary taſte is prudent; I only ſay, it is a delightful ſupplement to that ſenſe of happineſs which in other things exhauſts itſelf by enjoyment. If it be productive of evil, doubtleſs it ought to be rejected; if it deceives the heart by falſe pleaſure, it ought alſo on that account to be rejected. But after all, which has the greater incentive to virtue, the philoſopher with his ſublime maxims, or the Chriſtian with his humble ſimplicity? Who is moſt happy even in this world, the ſage with his profound underſtanding, or the enthuſiaſt with his rapture

ture of devotion? What buſineſs have I to think or imagine, when my faculties are all in a manner alienated? Will you ſay intoxication has its pleaſure? be it ſo, and be mine eſteemed ſuch if you will. Either leave me in this agreeable delirium, or ſhew me a ſituation more delightful.

I have condemned indeed the ecſtaſies of the myſtics; and condemn them ſtill, when they ſerve to detach us from our duty; and, by raiſing in us a diſguſt againſt an active life by the charms of contemplation, ſeduce us into that ſtate of quietiſm which you imagine me ſo near, and from which I believe myſelf nevertheleſs to be as far diſtant as you. I know very well, that to ſerve God is not to paſs our lives on our knees in prayer; that it is to diſcharge on earth thoſe obligations which our duty requires; it is to do, with a view to pleaſe him, every thing which the ſituation in which he hath placed us demands,

Il cor gradiſce;
E ſerve a lui chi 'l ſuo dover compiſce.

To have a heart that glows with pure deſire,
To love and ſerve where duty may require.

We ought firſt to perform the duties of our ſtation, and then pray when we have time. This is the rule I have endeavoured to follow: I do not make that ſelf-examination, with which you reproach me, a taſk, but a recreation: I do not ſee why, among the pleaſures that are within my reach, I ſhould be forbidden the moſt affecting and the moſt innocent of all.

I have examined myſelf with more ſeverity, ſince the receipt of your letter. I have inquired into the effects which the pious inclination, that ſo much diſpleaſes you, produces in my mind; and I can ſafely ſay, I ſee nothing that ſhould give me reaſon to fear, at leaſt ſo ſoon as you imagine, the evils of exceſſive and ſuperfluous devotion.

In the firſt place, I have not ſo fervent a longing after this exerciſe as to give me pain when I am deprived of an opportunity, nor am I out of humour at every avocation from it. It never interrupts my thoughts in the buſineſs of the day, nor gives me any diſguſt or impatience in the diſcharge of my duty. If retirement be ſometimes neceſſary, it is when I have felt ſome diſagreeable emotion, and am better in my cloſet than elſewhere. It is there, that, entering into the examination of myſelf, I recover my temper and eaſe. If any care troubles me, if any pain affects me, it is there I go and lay them down. Every pain, every trouble vaniſhes before a greater object. In reflecting on all the bounties of Providence towards me, I am aſhamed to be ſenſible of ſuch trifling ills, and to forget its greater mercies. I require neither frequent nor long intervals of ſolitude. When I am affected by involuntary ſadneſs, the ſhedding a few tears before Him who is the comforter of hearts, relieves mine in an inſtant. My reflections are never bitter nor grievous; even my repentance is free from dread: my errors give me leſs cauſe of fear than of ſhame; I regret that I have committed them, but I feel no remorſe, nor dread of their effects. The God I

ſerve

ſerve is a merciful Being; a Father, whoſe goodneſs only affects me, and ſurpaſſes all his other attributes. His power aſtoniſhes me; his immenſity confounds my ideas; his juſtice —— but he has made man weak; and though he be juſt, he is merciful. An avenging God is the God of the wicked. I can neither fear him on my own account, nor pray for his vengeance to be exerted againſt any other. It is the God of peace, the God of goodneſs, whom I adore. I know, I feel, I am the work of his hands, and truſt to ſee him, at the laſt day, ſuch as he has manifeſted himſelf to my heart during my life.

It is impoſſible for me to tell you how many pleaſing ideas ariſe hence, to render my days agreeable, and give joy to my heart. In leaving my cloſet in ſuch a diſpoſition, I feel myſelf more light and gay. Every care vaniſhes, every embarraſſment is removed; nothing rough or diſagreeable appears, but all is ſmooth and flowing: every thing wears a pleaſant countenance; it coſts me no pains to be in good humour; I love thoſe better whom I loved before, and am ſtill more agreeable to them: even my huſband is more pleaſed with the diſpoſition which is the effect of ſuch rational devotion. Devotion, he ſays, is the opium of the ſoul. When taken in ſmall quantities, it enlivens, it animates, it ſupports it: a ſtronger doſe lulls it to ſleep, enrages, or deſtroys it. I hope I ſhall never proceed to ſuch extremes.

You ſee I am not ſo much offended at the title of devotee, as perhaps you expected; but then I do not value it at the rate you imagine: yet I would not have the term *devotion* applied

to any affected external deportment, and to a ſort of employment which diſpenſes with every other. Thus, that Mrs Guyon you mention, had in my opinion done better to have carefully diſcharged her duty as miſtreſs of her family, to have educated her children in the Chriſtian faith, and to have governed her ſervants prudently, than to have compoſed books of devotion, diſputed with biſhops, and at laſt be impriſoned in the Baſtile for her unintelligible reveries.

As little do I approve of that myſtical and metaphorical language, which feeds the heart with chimeras, and in the place of ſpiritual love, ſubſtitutes ſentiments too nearly allied to carnal affections, and too apt to excite them. The more ſuſceptible the heart, or lively the imagination, the more we ought to be on our guard againſt thoſe images by which they may be affected: for how can we ſee the relations of the myſtical object, if we do not at the ſame time ſee the ſenſual; and how can a modeſt woman have the aſſurance to contemplate thoſe objects in her imagination, which ſhe would bluſh to look on.

But what ſets me moſt againſt theſe devotees by profeſſion, is that affectation of manners which renders them inſenſible to humanity; that exceſſive pride which makes them look down with pity on the reſt of mankind. If ever they condeſcend to ſtoop from their imaginary elevation to do an act of charity, it is always done in a manner extremely mortifying to the object: their pity is ſo cruel and inſulting, their juſtice is ſo rigid, their charity ſo ſevere, their zeal ſo bitter, their contempt ſo much like hatred, that even the inſenſibility of the reſt of the world

world is leſs cruel than their pity. Their love for heaven ſerves them as an excuſe for loving nobody on earth; they have even no affection for one another; nor is there an inſtance of ſincere friendſhip to be found among people of extreme devotion. The more detached they affect to be from the world, the more they expect from it; and one would think their devotion to God is exerted only that they may have a pretext to exerciſe his authority over the reſt of his creatures.

I have ſuch an averſion for all abuſes of this kind as ſhould naturally be my ſecurity: if nevertheleſs I am doomed to fall, it will not be voluntarily, and I hope, from the friendſhip of thoſe who are about me, that it will not be without warning. I muſt own, I now think that it was poſſible for my former inquietude concerning my huſband, to have effected ſuch a change. Happily, the prudent letter of my Lord B——, to which you very reaſonably refer me, together with his ſenſible and conſolatory converſation, as well as yours, have entirely diſſipated my fears and changed my principles. I now ſee plainly, that an intolerating ſpirit muſt by degrees become obdurate. For what charity can be long preſerved for thoſe who we think muſt inevitably be damned? To love them would be to hate God for puniſhing them. To act then on principles of humanity, we muſt take upon ourſelves to condemn actions only, and not men. Let us not aſſume the horrible function of devils. Let us not ſo lightly throw open the gates of hell for our fellow-creatures. Alas! if all thoſe are deſtined to be eternally miſerable who

deceive

deceive themſelves, where is the mortal who can avoid it?

O my friends! of what a load have you eaſed my heart? In teaching me that an error in judgment is no crime, you have delivered me from a thouſand tormenting ſcruples. I leave to others the ſubtile interpretation of dogmas which I do not comprehend, and content myſelf with thoſe glaring truths which ſtrike and at once convince me; thoſe practical truths which inſtruct me in my duty. As to any thing farther, I abide by the rule of your old anſwer to Mr Wolmar *. A man is not maſter of his own ſentiments to believe or diſbelieve what he pleaſes. Can it be a crime for one not to be a logician? No, it is not the buſineſs of conſcience to inſtruct us in the truth of things, but in the maxims of our duty. It does not teach us to reaſon well, but to act aright. In what can my huſband be criminal before God? Does he turn his eye from the contemplation of the Deity? God himſelf hath hid his face from his view. He does not ſhun the truth; the truth avoids him. He is not actuated by pride; he does not ſeek to convert any one to his own opinion. He is glad they are of a different one. He approves of our ſentiments, he wiſhes he had the ſame, but cannot. He is deprived of our conſolations and our hopes. He acts uprightly without even expecting a recompenſe: he is in fact more virtuous, more diſintereſted than we. He is indeed truly to be pitied! but wherefore ſhould he be puniſhed? No: goodneſs, ſincerity, honeſty, virtue,

* See page 177.

tue, theſe are what heaven requires, and what it will undoubtedly reward: theſe conſtitute the true ſervice which the Deity requires, and that ſervice Mr Wolmar moſt invariably performs. If God judges of our faith by our works, to be truly virtuous is to believe in him. A true Chriſtian is a virtuous man: the real infidels are the vicious.

Be not ſurpriſed, therefore, my dear friend, that I do not diſpute with you many particulars of your letter, concerning which we are not of the ſame opinion. I know too well what you are, to be in pain about what you believe. What do all thoſe idle queſtions about free agency concern me? Whether I myſelf have the power to do good, or can obtain it by prayer, if in the end I am enabled to do it, does it not amount to the ſame thing? Whether I acquire what is wanting by aſking for it, or the Deity grants it to my prayers, if it be neceſſary to aſk in order to have it, is not this a ſufficient explanation? Happy enough to agree about the principal articles of our faith, why need we inquire farther? Ought we to be deſirous of penetrating into the bottomleſs abyſs of metaphyſics, and, in diſputing about the eſſence of the Deity, throw away the ſhort time which is allotted us here to revere and honour him? We are ignorant what he is; but we know that he exiſts, and that is ſufficient; he manifeſts himſelf in his works, we feel him conſtantly within us. We may diſpute, but cannot ſincerely diſbelieve his exiſtence. He has given us that degree of ſenſibility which enables us to perceive, to embrace him; let us pity thoſe to whom he has not

not imparted ſuch a portion of ſuſceptibility, without flattering ourſelves that we ſhall be able to make them ſenſible of what they cannot feel. Let us reſpect his decrees in ſilence, and do our duty: this is the beſt method to make proſelytes.

Do you know any man of better ſenſe or a more enlightened underſtanding than Mr Wolmar? Do you know any one more ſincere, more upright, more juſt, leſs ſubject to the controul of his paſſions; who will be a greater gainer by divine juſtice or the ſoul's immortality? Do you know any man more nervous, more ſublime, more convincing in a diſpute, than Lord B——? is there any perſon by his virtue more worthy of entering on the defence of the cauſe of God, more certain of his exiſtence, more ſincerely penetrated with the idea of divine majeſty, more zealous for his glory, and more capable of ſupporting it? Yet you have been a witneſs of what paſſed during three months at Clarens: you have ſeen two men, having the higheſt eſteem and reſpect for each other, and equally diſdainful of the pedantry and quirk of ſcholaſtic logic, paſs a whole winter in prudent and peaceful as well as lively and profound argumentations, with a view to convert each other; you have ſeen them attack and defend themſelves, and take every advantage of which human underſtanding is capable; and that on a ſubject wherein both, being equally intereſted, deſired nothing ſo earneſtly as to be of one mind.

What was the conſequence? their mutual eſteem is augmented, and yet both retain their former ſentiments. If ſuch an example does not

for

for ever cure a prudent man of the rage of diſpute, the love of truth I am ſure never will.

For my part, I have thrown aſide, and that for ever, ſuch an uſeleſs weapon; and am determined never to mention a ſingle word more to my huſband about religion, unleſs it be to give a reaſon for mine. Not that a notion of divine toleration has rendered me indifferent to his. I muſt confeſs, that, though I am become tranquil about his future ſtate, I do not find I am the leſs zealous for his converſion. I would lay down my life to ſee him once convinced of the truth of divine revelation, if not for the ſake of his future happineſs, at leaſt for his happineſs in this life. For of how many pleaſures is he not on this account deprived? What ſentiments can give him comfort in his afflictions? What ſpectator excites him to thoſe good deeds he performs in ſecret? What rewards does he hope for from his virtue? How can he look upon death? No, I hope he will not meet it in this terrible ſituation. There remains but one expedient more for me to try to prevent it; and to that I conſecrate the remainder of my life. This is, not to convince, but to affect him: to ſet him a prevailing example, and to make religion ſo amiable that he ſhall not be able to reſiſt her charms. Ah! my friend! what a forcible argument againſt infidelity is the life of a true Chriſtian! Do you believe there is a being on earth proof againſt it? This is the taſk I impoſe on myſelf for the future; aſſiſt me to perform it. Mr Wolmar is cold, but not inſenſible. What a picture might we lay open to his heart? his friends, his children, his wife, all uniting to his

his edification! When, without preaching about God in our diſcourſes, we ſhall demonſtrate him by thoſe actions which he inſpires, by thoſe virtues of which he is the author, by the pleaſure we take in his ſervice: when he ſhall ſee a ſketch of paradiſe in his own houſe; when an hundred times a-day he ſhall be compelled to cry out, "Human nature is of itſelf incapable of this; "ſomething divine muſt prevail here."

If my enterpriſe pleaſes you, if you find yourſelf worthy to concur in it, come and let us paſs our days together, and never part more till death. If the project diſpleaſes or frightens you, liſten to the dictates of your conſcience; that will teach you your duty. I have no more to ſay.

Agreeable to what Lord B—— intimates, I ſhall expect you both towards the latter end of next month. You will hardly know your apartment again; but in the alteration made in it you will diſcover the care of a good friend, who took a pleaſure in ornamenting it for you. You will find there, alſo, a ſmall aſſortment of books, which ſhe bought for you at Geneva, of a better taſte than the *Adonis*; not but that for the jeſt's ſake you will find that too. You muſt however be diſcreet; for, as ſhe would not have you know this is her doing, I haſten to finiſh my letter before ſhe comes to forbid my ſpeaking of it.

Adieu, my dear friend. Our party of pleaſure to the caſtle of Chillon will take place tomorrow without you. It will not be the better for that. The bailiff has invited us with our children, which leaves me no excuſe; but I know

know not why, and yet I cannot help wiſhing we were ſafe returned.

LETTER CLIX.

From FANNY ANET.

OH Sir! O my benefactor! what ſad tidings am I ordered to write to you! Madam—my poor miſtreſs—good God! methinks I ſee already how frightened you are! but you cannot ſee the affliction we are all in here.——But I have not a moment to loſe—I muſt tell you.—I muſt run—O that I had already told you all! —Ah, what will become of you, when you know our misfortune!

The whole family went out yeſterday to dine at Chillon. The baron, who was going into Savoy to ſpend ſome days at the caſtle of Blonay, went away after dinner. The company attended him a little way, and afterwards walked along the dyke. Mrs Orbe and the bailiff's lady went before with my maſter; my miſtreſs followed, having hold by one hand of Harriot and by the other of Marcellin. I came after with the eldeſt. His honour, the bailiff, who had ſtaid behind to ſpeak to ſomebody, came up; and joining the company, offered my miſtreſs his arm; which, in order to accept of, ſhe ſent Marcellin to me. I ran forward to meet him, while the child did the ſame towards me; but, in running, his foot ſlipped, and he fell unhappily into the water. I ſcreamed out, when my miſtreſs, turning her head and ſeeing the child

in the water, flew back in an inſtant and threw herſelf in after him.

Ah, unhappy that I am! why did I not throw myſelf in too! better had I been drowned on the ſpot!——With difficulty I kept the eldeſt from leaping after its mother, who kept ſtruggling with the other in her arms.——No boat, nor people were at hand, ſo that ſome time paſſed before they could be got out of the water—— the child ſoon recovered, but as for the mother ——the fright, the fall, the condition ſhe was in——ah none knows better than I the danger of ſuch a fall! ſhe was taken out, and remained a good while inſenſible. The moment ſhe came to herſelf, ſhe inquired eagerly after the child—heavens! with what tranſport did ſhe embrace him! I thought ſhe was quite well again; but her ſpirits laſted her but for a moment: ſhe inſiſted on being brought home, but fainted away ſeveral times during the journey. By ſome orders ſhe gave me, I ſaw ſhe believed ſhe ſhould not recover. Her fears were, alas! too true! ſhe will never recover. Mrs Orbe is a good deal more altered than ſhe. They are all diſtracted; I am the moſt ſenſible in the whole houſe.——Why ſhould I be uneaſy? ah! my good miſtreſs, if I loſe you I ſhall never have occaſion for another.——O my dear Sir! may heaven enable you to ſupport this trial! Adieu! the phyſician is this moment coming out of the chamber. I muſt run to meet him:—if he gives me hopes, I will let you know it. If I ſay nothing———

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LETTER CLX.

From Mrs ORBE.

IT is fulfilled!——Imprudent, unfortunate man! unhappy dreamer! you will now indeed never ſee her more—alas! the vail—Julia is no more.——

She has herſelf written to you, I refer you to her letter: reſpect, I charge you, her laſt requeſt. Great and many are the obligations you have to diſcharge on this ſide the grave.——

LETTER CLXI.

From Mr WOLMAR.

I HAVE ſuffered you to indulge the firſt tranſports of your grief: my writing to you would but have aggravated your ſorrow, as I was no better qualified to relate than you to read our ſad tale. At preſent, poſſibly, ſuch a relation may not be diſagreeable to either of us. As nothing remains but the remembrance of her, my heart takes a delight in recalling every token of that remembrance to my mind. You will have ſome conſolation in ſhedding tears to her memory; but of that grand relief of the unfortunate I am conſtitutionally deprived, and am therefore unhappier than you.

It is not, however, of her illneſs, but of herſelf, I would write. Another might have thrown herſelf into the water to ſave her child; ſuch an

accident, her fever, her death, are natural, and may be common to other mortals: but the employment of her laſt moments, her converſation, her ſentiments, her fortitude, all theſe are peculiar to Julia. She was no leſs ſingular in the hour of death, than ſhe had been during the whole courſe of her life; and as I was the ſole witneſs to many particulars, you can learn them from me alone.

You already know that her fright, her agitation, the fall, and the water ſhe had imbibed, threw her into fainting fits, from which ſhe did not recover until after ſhe was brought home. On being carried into the houſe, ſhe aſked again for the child; the child was brought; and, ſeeing him walk about and return her careſſes, ſhe became apparently eaſy, and conſented to take a little reſt. Her ſleep was but ſhort, and as the phyſician was not yet come, ſhe made us ſit round on the bed; that is, Fanny, her couſin, and me. She talked to us about her children, of the great diligence and care which her plan of education required, and of the danger of a moment's neglect. Without making her illneſs of any great importance, ſhe foreſaw, ſhe ſaid, that it would prevent her for ſome time from diſcharging her part of that duty, and charged us to divide it amongſt us.

She enlarged on her own projects, on yours, on the moſt proper means to carry them into execution; on the obſervations ſhe had made as to what would promote or injure them; and, in a word, on every thing which might enable us to ſupply her place, in the diſcharge of the duties of a mother, ſo long as ſhe might be prevented

vented from it herſelf. I thought ſo much precaution unneceſſary for one who imagined ſhe ſhould be prevented from exerciſing ſuch employment only for a few days: but what added to my apprehenſions, was to hear her enter into a long and particular charge reſpecting Harriot. As to her ſons, ſhe contented herſelf with what concerned their education in the earlieſt infancy, as if relying on another for the care of their youth: but in ſpeaking of Harriot, ſhe went farther, extending her remarks even to her coming of age; and, being ſenſible that nothing could ſupply the place of thoſe reflections which her own experience dictated, ſhe gave us a clear and methodical abſtract of the plan of education ſhe had laid down, recommending it to the mother in the moſt lively and affecting manner.

All theſe exhortations, reſpecting the education of young perſons, and the duty of mothers, mixed with frequent applications to herſelf, could not fail to render the converſation extremely intereſting: I ſaw indeed that it affected her too much. In the mean time, her couſin held one of her hands, preſſing it every now and then to her lips, and bathing it with tears at every reply: Fanny was not leſs moved: and as for Julia herſelf, I obſerved the big tears ſwell out of her eyes and ſteal down her cheeks; but ſhe was afraid to let us ſee ſhe wept, leſt it ſhould alarm us. But I then ſaw, that ſhe knew her life was drawing towards its final period. My only hope was that her fears might deceive her, and repreſent the danger greater than it really was. Unhappily, however, I knew her too well to

build much upon ſuch a deception. I endeavoured ſeveral times to ſtop her, and at laſt begged of her not to waſte her ſpirits by talking ſo much at once on a ſubject which might be continued at our leiſure. Ah! my dear, replied ſhe, do not you know that nothing hurts a woman ſo much as ſilence? and, ſince I find myſelf a little feveriſh, I may as well employ my diſcourſe about uſeful matters as prattle away the time about trifles.

The arrival of the phyſician put the whole houſe into a confuſion, which it is impoſſible to deſcribe. All the domeſtics were gathered about the door of the chamber, where they waited with their arms folded and anxious looks, to know his opinion of their miſtreſs's ſituation, as if their own deſtiny were depending. This ſight threw poor Mrs Orbe into ſuch an agony of grief, that I began to be afraid of her ſenſes. Under different pretences, therefore, I diſmiſſed them, that their preſence might no longer affect her. The phyſician gave us indeed a little hope, but in ſuch vague terms that it ſerved to convince me there was none. Julia was alſo reſerved on account of her couſin. When the doctor left the chamber, I followed him, which Clara was alſo going to do; but Julia detained her, and gave me a wink which I underſtood, and therefore immediately told the phyſician, that if there were any real danger he ſhould as carefully conceal it from Mrs Orbe as from the patient, leſt her deſpair ſhould render her incapable of attending her friend. He told me the caſe was indeed dangerous; but that four-and-twenty hours being hardly elapſed ſince the accident,

cident, it required more time to form a certain judgment: that the ſucceeding night might determine the fate of the patient; but that he could not poſitively pronounce any thing till the third day. Fanny alone was by on his ſaying this, on whom we prevailed with ſome difficulty to ſtifle her emotions, and agreed upon what was proper to tell Mrs Orbe and the reſt of the family.

Toward the evening, Julia prevailed with her couſin, who had ſat up with her the preceding night, and was deſirous of continuing her vigilance, to go to bed for ſome hours. In the mean time, the patient being informed that ſhe was to be bled in the foot, and that the phyſician was preſcribing for her, ſhe ſent for him to her bed-ſide, and addreſſed him thus:

"Mr Bouſſon, when it is neceſſary to flatter "a timid patient as to the danger of his caſe, "the precaution is humane, and I approve of "it; but it is a piece of cruelty to laviſh equal-"ly on all, the diſagreeable remedies which to "many may be ſuperfluous. Preſcribe for me "every thing that you think will be really uſe-"ful, and I will punctually follow your pre-"ſcriptions. But as to thoſe of mere experi-"ment, I beg you will excuſe me: it is my "body and not my mind which is diſordered; "and I am not afraid to end my days, but to "miſpend thoſe which remain. The laſt mo-"ments of life are too precious to be thrown "away. If you cannot prolong mine, there-"fore, I beg you will at leaſt not ſhorten them, "by preventing me from employing them as I "ought. Either recover me entirely, or leave

"me;

"me; I can die alone." Thus, my friend, did this woman, ſo mild and timid on ordinary occaſions, know how to exert herſelf in a reſolute and ſerious manner at this important criſis.

The night was cruel and deciſive. Suffocation, oppreſſion, fainting, her ſkin dry and burning. An ardent fever tormented her; during the continuance of which ſhe was heard frequently to call out *Marcellin*, as if to prevent his running into the water; and to pronounce alſo another name, formerly repeated on a like occaſion. The next day the phyſician told me plainly, that he did not think ſhe could live three days. I alone was made privy to this afflicting piece of information; and the moſt terrible hour of my life was that wherein I kept it a ſecret in my breaſt, without knowing what uſe to make of it. I ſtrayed out alone into the garden, muſing on the meaſures I ought to take; not without many afflicting reflections on the misfortune of being reduced, in the laſt ſtage of life, to that ſolitude of which I was ſufficiently tired even before I had experienced a ſtate more agreeable.

I had promiſed Julia the night before, to tell her faithfully the opinion of the phyſician, and ſhe had engaged me by every prevailing argument to keep my word. I felt that engagement on my conſcience: but what to do I was greatly at a loſs. Shall I, ſaid I to myſelf, in order to diſcharge a uſeleſs and chimerical duty, afflict her ſoul with the news, and lengthen the pangs of death? to tell her the hour of her diſſolution, is it not in fact to anticipate the fatal moment? in ſo ſhort an interval what will become

come of the deſires, the hopes, the elements of life? ſhall I kill my Julia?

Thus meditating on what I ſhould do, I walked on with long and haſty ſtrides, and in an agitation of mind I had never before experienced. It was not in my power to ſhake off the painful anxiety; it remained an inſupportable weight on my ſpirits. At length I was determined by a ſudden thought.

For whoſe ſake, ſaid I, do I deliberate? for her's, or for mine? On whoſe principles do I reaſon? is it on her ſyſtem, or my own? What demonſtration have I of the truth? In ſupport of her ſyſtem, ſhe alſo has nothing but opinion; but that opinion carries with it the force of evidence, and is in her eyes a demonſtration. What right have I, in a matter which relates chiefly to her, to prefer my opinion, which I acknowledge to be doubtful, to her's which ſhe thinks demonſtrated? Let us compare the conſequences of both. According to her's, her diſpoſition in the laſt hour of her life will decide her fate to all eternity. According to mine, all that I can do for her will be a matter of indifference in three days. According to my ſyſtem, ſhe will be then inſenſible to every thing: but if ſhe be in the right, what a difference will there be! eternal happineſs or miſery! perhaps ——that word is terrible——wretch! riſque thy own ſoul, and not her's.

This was the firſt doubt I ever had concerning that ſcepticiſm you have ſo often attacked; but it was not the laſt. This doubt, however, freed me from the other. I immediately reſolved; and for fear my mind ſhould change, ran di-

directly to Julia's chamber, where, after dismissing every body from their attendance, I sat down by her bed-side. I did not make use of those trifling precautions which are necessary with little minds. I was indeed for some time silent; but she looked at me, and seemed to read my thoughts. Then, holding out her hand, Do you think, said she, you bring me news? no, my dear friend, I know it already; the cold hand of death is upon me; we must part for ever.

She proceeded, and continued with me a long conversation; of which I may one day give you an account; and during which she engraved her testament on my heart. If I had indeed been ignorant of her disposition before, her temper of mind at this time would sufficiently have informed me.

She asked me, if her danger was known in the house. I told her, Every one was greatly apprehensive, but that they knew nothing for certain, and that the physician had acquainted me only with his opinion. On this she conjured me carefully to keep it a secret for the remainder of the day. Clara, continued she, will not be able to support this stroke, unless it comes from my hand. I shall take upon me that afflicting office to-night. It is chiefly for this reason that I desired to have the advice of a physician, that I might not subject her unnecessarily, and merely on my own suggestions, to so cruel a trial. Take care that she may know nothing of it before the time, or you will certainly risque the loss of a friend, and your children that of a mother.

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She then aſked me after her father. I owned that I had ſent an expreſs to him: but took care to conceal from her, that the meſſenger, inſtead of contenting himſelf with delivering my letter, as I had ordered him, blundered out a ſtory, from which my old friend, falſely collecting that his daughter was drowned, fell down ſtairs in a ſwoon and hurt himſelf; ſo that he kept his bed at Blonay. The hopes of ſeeing her father, affected her very ſenſibly; and the certainty I had of the vanity of ſuch hope, had no ſmall ſhare in my uneaſineſs.

The paroxyſms of the preceding night had rendered her extremely weak: nor did this long converſation at all increaſe her ſtrength. In this feeble ſituation, therefore, ſhe ſtrove to get a little ſleep in the day-time; nor did I know, till two days after, that ſhe did not ſleep the whole time.

The family continued in great anxiety; every one waiting in mournful ſilence for each other to remove their uneaſineſs, yet, without daring to aſk any queſtions for fear of being told more than they wiſhed to know. If there were any good news, they ſaid to themſelves, every one would be eager enough to tell it; and the bad we ſhall know but too ſoon. In this terrible ſuſpence they were ſatisfied ſo long as they heard of no alteration for the worſe. Amidſt this dreadful ſilence, Mrs Orbe only was active and talkative. As ſoon as ſhe came out of Julia's chamber, inſtead of going to reſt, ſhe ran up and down the houſe, aſking what the doctor ſaid to the one, and to the other. She had ſat up all the preceding night, and could not be ignorant

rant of what ſhe had ſeen; but ſhe ſtrove even to impoſe on herſelf, and to diſtruſt the evidence of her ſenſes. Thoſe ſhe interrogated always giving her favourable anſwers, encouraged her to aſk others, which ſhe continued to do with ſuch an air of ſolicitude and poignant diſtreſs, that whoever had known the truth could not have been prevailed upon to tell it her.

In the preſence of Julia ſhe concealed her anxiety, and indeed the affecting object which ſhe had before her eyes was ſufficiently afflicting to ſuppreſs her vivacity. She was above all things ſolicitous to hide her fears from Julia; but ſhe could very ill conceal them. Her trouble even appeared in her affectation to hide it. Julia, on her part alſo, ſpared no pains to deceive her couſin, as to the true ſtate of her caſe. Without making light of her illneſs, ſhe affected to ſpeak of it as a thing that was already paſt, ſeeming uneaſy only at the time neceſſary to reſtore her. How greatly did I ſuffer to ſee them mutually ſtriving to conquer each other, while I knew that neither of them entertained that hope in their own breaſts, with which each endeavoured to inſpire the other.

Mrs Orbe had ſat up the two preceding nights, and had not been undreſſed for three days. Julia propoſed, therefore, that ſhe ſhould retire to her own bed: but ſhe refuſed. Well then, ſaid Julia, let a little bed be made up for you in my chamber; if, added ſhe, as if ſhe had juſt thought of it, you will not take part of mine. Come, my dear, ſays ſhe, what ſay you? I am not worſe, and, if you have no objection, you ſhall ſleep with me. This propoſal was accept-

ed.

ed. For my part, they turned me out of the room, and really I ſtood in need of reſt.

I roſe early the next morning; and, being anxious for what might have paſſed in the night, as ſoon as I heard them ſtirring, I went into her chamber. From the ſituation in which Mrs Orbe appeared the preceding evening, I expected to find her extremely agitated. In entering the room, however, I ſaw her ſitting on the ſettee, ſpiritleſs and pale, or rather of a livid complexion; her eyes heavy and dead; yet ſhe appeared calm and tranquil, but ſpoke little. As for Julia, ſhe appeared leſs feeble than overnight: the tone of her voice was ſtrong, and her geſture animated; ſhe ſeemed indeed to have borrowed the vivacity of her couſin. I could eaſily perceive, however, that this promiſing appearance was in a great meaſure the effect of her fever; but I remarked alſo in her looks that ſomething had given her a ſecret joy which contributed to it not a little; but of which I could not diſcover the cauſe. The phyſician confirmed his former opinion, the patient continued alſo in the ſame ſentiments, and there remained no hope.

Being obliged to leave her for ſome time, I obſerved, in coming again into her apartment, that every thing appeared in great order. She had cauſed flower-pots to be placed on the chimney-piece; here curtains were half-open and tied back; the air of the room was changed; a grateful odour every-where diffuſing itſelf; ſo that no one would have taken it for the bed-chamber of a ſick perſon. The ſame taſte and elegance appeared alſo in her diſhabille; all

which gave her rather the air of a woman of quality, waiting to receive company, than of a country lady who was preparing for her laſt moments. She ſaw my ſurpriſe, ſmiled at it, and, gueſſing my ſentiments, was going to ſpeak to me, when the children were brought into the room. Theſe now engaged her attention; and you may judge whether, finding herſelf ready to part from them for ever, her careſſes were cold or moderate. I even took notice that ſhe turned oftener, and with more warmth, to him who was the cauſe of her death, as if he was become more dear to her on that account.

Theſe embraces, ſighs, and tranſports, were all myſteries to the poor children. They loved her indeed tenderly; but it was with that tenderneſs peculiar to their age. They comprehended nothing of her condition, of the repetition of her careſſes, of her regret at never ſeeing them more: as they ſaw us ſorrowful and affected, they wept; but knew nothing more. We may teach children to repeat the word death; but we cannot give them any idea of it: they neither fear it for themſelves or others; they fear to ſuffer pain, but not to die. When the exceſs of pain drew complaints from their poor mother, they pierced the air with their cries; but when we talked to them of loſing her, they ſeemed ſtupid, and comprehended nothing. Harriot alone, being a little older than the others, and of a ſex in which underſtanding and ſentiment appear earlier than in the other, ſeemed troubled and frightened to ſee her little mamma in bed, whom ſhe uſed always to ſee ſtirring about

bout with her children. I remember, that, on this occaſion, Julia made a reflection quite in character, on the ridiculous vanity of Veſpaſian, who kept his bed ſo long as he was able to do any thing, and roſe when he could do no more*. I know not, ſays ſhe, if it be neceſſary that an emperor ſhould die out of his bed: but this I know, that the mother of a family ſhould never take to her bed, unleſs to die.

After having wept over the children, and taken every one of them apart, particularly Harriot, whom ſhe kept ſome time, and who lamented and ſobbed grievouſly, ſhe called them all three together; gave them her bleſſing; and, pointing to Mrs Orbe, Go, my children, ſaid ſhe, go and throw yourſelves at the feet of your mother; this is ſhe whom Providence has given you, depriving you of nothing in taking me. Immediately they all ran to her, threw themſelves on their knees, and, laying hold of her hands, called her their good mamma, their ſecond mother. Clara ſtooped forward to embrace them, but ſtrove in vain to ſpeak; ſhe could only utter a few broken and imperfect exclamations, amidſt ſighs and ſobs that ſtifled her voice. Judge if Julia was not moved! the ſcene indeed became too affecting; for which reaſon I interrupted it.

As ſoon as it was over, we ſat down again

* This is not quite exact. Suetonius tells us that Veſpaſian employed himſelf as uſual, and gave audience on his death-bed: but perhaps he had done better to have riſen to give audience, and to have gone to bed again to die. This I know, that Veſpaſian, if not a great man, was at leaſt a great prince; but it is not a time to put on the comedian at the hour of death.

round the bed; and, though the vivacity of Julia was a little ſuppreſſed by the foregoing ſcene, ſhe preſerved the ſame air of content in her looks: ſhe talked on every ſubject with all that attention and regard which beſpeaks a mind at eaſe; nothing eſcaped her: ſhe was as intent on the converſation as if ſhe had nothing elſe to think of. She propoſed that we ſhould dine in her chamber, that ſhe might have as much of our company as poſſible for the ſhort time ſhe had to live: you may believe this propoſal was not on our part rejected.

The dinner was ſerved up without noiſe, confuſion, or diſorder, but with as much regularity as if it had been in the Apollo. Fanny and the children dined with us. Julia, taking notice that every one wanted an appetite, had the art to prevail on us to eat of almoſt every thing; one time by pretending to inſtruct the cook, at another by aſking whether ſhe might not venture to taſte this or that, and then by recommending it to us to take care of our health, without which we ſhould not be capable of doing her the ſervice her illneſs required. In ſhort, no miſtreſs of a family, however ſolicitous to do the honours of her houſe, could in full health have ſhewn, even to ſtrangers, more obliging or more amiable marks of her kindneſs, than thoſe which dying Julia expreſſed for her family. Nothing of what I expected happened, nothing of what really happened ever entered my head. In ſhort, I was loſt in aſtoniſhment.

After dinner, word was brought up that the clergyman was come. He came as a friend to the family, as he often favoured us with a viſit.

Though

Though I had not ſent for him, as Julia did not requeſt it, I muſt confeſs to you I was pleaſed to hear he was come, and imagine the moſt zealous believer could not on the ſame occaſion have welcomed him with greater pleaſure. His preſence indeed promiſed the removal of many of my doubts, and ſome relief from my perplexity.

You will recollect the motives for my telling her of her approaching end. By the effect which according to my notions, ſuch a ſhocking piece of information ſhould have had on her, how could I conceive that which it really had? how could I imagine that a woman ſo devout as not to paſs a day, when in health, without meditation, who made the exerciſe of prayer her delight and amuſement, ſhould at ſuch a time as this, when ſhe had but two days to live, when ſhe was juſt ready to appear before her awful Judge, inſtead of making peace with God and her conſcience, amuſe herſelf in ornamenting her chamber, chatting with her friends, and diverting them at their meals, without ever dropping a word concerning God's grace, or her own ſalvation? What could I think of her, and her real ſentiments? how reconcile her conduct with the notions I had entertained of her piety? how could I reconcile the uſe ſhe made of her laſt moments to what ſhe had ſaid to the phyſician, of their great importance? All this appeared to me an inexplicable enigma; for tho' I did not expect to find her practiſing all the hypocritical airs of the devotees, it ſeemed to me, however, high time to think of what ſhe judged of ſo much importance, and that it ſhould

ſuffer no delay. If one is devout amidſt the noiſe and hurry of life, how can one be otherwiſe at the moment we are going to quite it, and when there remains no longer time to think of another?

Theſe reflections led me farther than I thought I ever ſhould proceed. I began to be uneaſy leſt my opinions, indiſcreetly maintained, might at length have gained too much upon her belief. I had not adopted her's, and yet I was not willing that ſhe ſhould have renounced them. Had I been ſick, I ſhould certainly have died in my own way of thinking, but I was deſirous that ſhe ſhould die alſo in her's. Theſe contradictory notions will appear to you very extravagant; I myſelf do not find them very reaſonable; they were, however, ſuch as really ſuggeſted themſelves at that time. I do not undertake to juſtify, I only relate them.

At length the time drew near when my doubts were to be cleared up: for it was eaſy to ſee, that, ſooner or latter, the miniſter would turn the converſation on the object of his duty; and though Julia had been capable of diſguiſe, it would be too difficult for her to do it in ſuch a manner that a perſon attentive and prepoſſeſſed as I was, ſhould not perceive her real ſentiments.

Accordingly it happened as I expected. To paſs over, however, the common-place compliments with which this worthy clergyman introduced the ſubject, as well as the affecting manner in which he repreſented the happineſs of crowning a well-ſpent life by a Chriſtian exit; he added, that he had indeed remembered her

to

to have maintained opinions, on ſome points, different from thoſe of the church, or ſuch as may be moſt reaſonably deduced from the ſacred writings; but that, as ſhe had never perſiſted in defending them, he hoped ſhe would die, as ſhe had lived, in the communion of the faithful, and acquieſce in all the particulars of their common confeſſion.

As Julia's anſwer removed at once all my doubts, and differed a good deal from the common-place diſcourſes on ſuch occaſions, I ſhall give it you almoſt word for word; for I liſtened to it very attentively, and committed it to paper immediately after.

"Permit me, Sir, ſaid ſhe, to begin by "thanking you for all the care you have taken "to conduct me in the paths of virtue and "Chriſtianity, and for that complacency with "which you have borne with my errors when "I have gone aſtray. Filled with a due reſpect "for your zeal, as well as gratitude for all your "goodneſs, I declare with pleaſure that it is to "you I am indebted for all my good reſoluti-"ons, and that you have always directed me "to do what was right, and to believe what "was true.

"I have lived and I die in the proteſtant com-"munion, whoſe maxims are deduced from "ſcripture and reaſon; concerning which my "heart hath always confirmed what my lips ut-"tered; and though I may not have had al-"ways that docility in regard to your precepts "which perhaps I ought, it has ariſen from my "averſion to all kind of hypocriſy: that which "I could not believe, I never could profeſs; I

"have

" have always ſincerely ſought what was moſt
" conformable to truth, and the glory of my
" Creator. I may have been deceived in my
" reſearch; not having the vanity to think I
" have always been in the right. I may, in-
" deed, have been conſtantly in the wrong;
" but my intention has been invariably good.
" This was as much as was in my own power.
" If God did not vouchſafe to enlighten my un-
" derſtanding farther, he is too merciful and
" juſt to demand of me an account of what he
" has not committed to my care.

" This, Sir, is all I think neceſſary to ſay on
" the opinions I profeſs. As to the reſt, let
" my preſent ſituation anſwer for me. With
" my head diſtracted by illneſs, and ſubjected
" to the delirium of a fever, is it now a proper
" time to endeavour to reaſon better than I did
" when in health, when my underſtanding was
" unimpaired and as ſound as I received it from
" my Maker?—If I was deceived then, am I
" leſs ſubject to be ſo now? and in my preſent
" weakneſs, does it depend on me to believe o-
" therwiſe than I did when in full health and
" ſtrength of body and mind? It is our reaſon
" which determines our belief, but mine has
" loſt its beſt faculties; what dependance then
" could be made on the opinions I ſhould now
" adopt without it? What now remains for me
" to do, is to appeal to what I believed before;
" for the uprightneſs of my intention is the
" ſame, though I have loſt my judgment. If I
" am in an error, I am ſorry for and deteſt it;
" and this is ſufficient to ſet my heart at eaſe as
" to my belief.

" As

" As to my preparation for death; that, Sir,
" is made; badly indeed, I own; but it is done
" in the beſt manner I could, and at leaſt much
" better than I can do it now. I endeavoured
" to diſcharge that important part of my duty
" before I became incapable of it. I prayed in
" health; at preſent, now I am weak, I am re-
" ſigned. The beſt prayers of the ſick are pa-
" tience and reſignation. The preparation of
" death, is a good life; I know of no other.
" While I converſed with you, while I medita-
" ted by myſelf, while I endeavoured to diſ-
" charge the duties which Providence ordained
" for me; it was then I was preparing myſelf
" for death; for meeting my God and Judge
" at my laſt hour. It was then I adored him
" with all my faculties and powers: what more
" can I now do, when I have loſt them? Is my
" languid ſoul in a condition to raiſe itſelf to
" the Almighty? this remnant of a half-extin-
" guiſhed life, abſorbed in pain, is it worthy of
" being offered up to God? No, Sir, he leaves
" it me to employ it for thoſe he taught me to
" love, and from whom it is his ſovereign will
" that I ſhould now depart: I am going to leave
" them, to go to him; it is therefore with them
" I ſhould now concern myſelf; I ſhall ſoon
" have nothing to do but with him alone. The
" laſt pleaſure I take on earth, ſhall be in doing
" my laſt duty; is not that to ſerve him and do
" his will, to diſcharge all thoſe duties which
" humanity enjoins me before I throw it off en-
" tirely? What have I to do to calm troubles
" which I have not? My conſcience is not
" troubled: if ſometimes it has accuſed me, it

" has

" has done it more when I was in health than
" at preſent. It tells me now that God is more
" merciful than I am criminal; and my confi-
" dence increaſes as I find I approach nearer to
" him. I do not preſent him with an imper-
" fect, tardy, or forced repentance, which,
" dictated by fear, can never be truly ſincere,
" and is only a ſnare by which the falſe peni-
" tent is deceived. I do not preſent him with
" the ſervice of the remnant and latter end of
" my days, full of pain and ſorrow, a prey to
" ſickneſs, grief, anxiety, death; and which I
" would not dedicate to his ſervice till I could
" do nothing elſe. No, I preſent before him
" my whole life, full indeed of errors and
" faults, but exempt from the remorſe of the
" impious, and the crimes of the wicked.

" To what puniſhment can a juſt God con-
" demn me? The reprobate, it is ſaid, hate him.
" Muſt he not firſt make me not love him?
" No, I fear not to be found one of that num-
" ber. O thou great eternal Being! ſupreme
" Intelligence! Source of life and happineſs!
" Creator, Preſerver, Father, Lord of nature!
" God powerful and good, of whoſe exiſtence I
" never doubted for a moment, and under whoſe
" eye I have always delighted to live! I know,
" I rejoice, that I am going to appear before
" thy throne. In a few days my ſoul, delivered
" from its earthly tabernacle, ſhall begin to pay
" thee more worthily that homage which will
" conſtitute my happineſs to all eternity. I
" look upon what I ſhall be, till that moment
" comes, as nothing. My body, indeed, ſtill
" lives; but my intellectual life is at an end.

" I am

" I am at the end of my career, and am already judged from what is paſt. To ſuffer, to " die, is all that I have now to do: and this is " nature's work. I have endeavoured to live in " ſuch a manner as to have no occaſion to con- " cern myſelf at death; and now it approach- " es, I ſee it without fear. Thoſe who ſleep " in the boſom of a father, are in no fear of " being awaked."

This diſcourſe, begun in a grave and ſlow voice, and ending in a more elevated and animated tone, made on every one preſent, myſelf not excepted, an impreſſion the more lively, as the eyes of her who pronounced it ſeemed to ſparkle with a ſupernatural fire; rays of light ſeemed to encircle her brow; and, if there be any thing in this world which deſerves the name of celeſtial, it was certainly the face of Julia, while ſhe was thus ſpeaking.

The miniſter himſelf was tranſported at what he heard; and, lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, Good God! ſaid he, behold the worſhip that truly honours thee! deign to render it propitious; for how ſeldom do mortals offer thee the like!

Madam, continued he, turning to Julia and approaching her bed, I thought to have inſtructed you, but have myſelf been inſtructed. I have nothing farther to ſay. You have that true faith, which knows how to love God. Bear with you that precious repoſe and teſtimony of a good conſcience; it will not deceive you. I have ſeen many Chriſtians in your ſituation, but never before ſaw any thing like this. What a difference between ſuch a peaceful end, and

that

that of thoſe terrified ſinners, who implore heaven with vain and idle prayers unworthy to be heard! Your death, Madam, is as exemplary as your life: you have lived to exerciſe your charity to mankind, and die a martyr to maternal tenderneſs. Whether it pleaſe God to reſtore you to us, to ſerve us as an example; or whether he is pleaſed to call you to himſelf, to crown your virtue with its due reward; may we all, ſo long as we ſurvive, live like you, and in the end follow your example in death; we ſhall then be certain of happineſs in that life which will never end.

He offered now to take his leave; but Julia prevailed on him to ſtay. You are one of my friends, ſaid ſhe to him, and one of thoſe I take the greateſt pleaſure to ſee; it is for thoſe my laſt moments are ſo precious. We are going to part for too long a time, to part ſo ſoon now. He was well pleaſed to ſtay, and I went out and left them.

At my return, I found the converſation continued ſtill on the ſame ſubject; but in a leſs intereſting manner. The miniſter complained much of that falſe notion, which makes religion only of uſe to perſons on their death-bed, and which repreſents its miniſters as men of ill omen. We are looked upon, ſays he, in common rather as the meſſengers of ſorrow and death, than of the glad tidings of life and ſalvation: and that becauſe, from the convenient opinion of the world that a quarter of an hour's repentance is ſufficient to efface fifty years of guilt, we are only welcome at ſuch a time. We muſt be clothed in a mournful habit, and affect a mo-

moroſe air; in ſhort, nothing is ſpared to render us diſmal and terrifying. It is yet worſe, in other religious profeſſions. A dying Roman catholic is ſurrounded by objects the moſt terrifying, and is peſtered with ceremonies that in a manner bury him alive. By the pains they take to keep the devils from him, he imagines he ſees his chamber full of them; he dies a hundred times with fear before he expires; and it is in this ſtate of horror the church delights to plunge the dying ſinner, in order to make the greater advantage of his purſe.

Thank God, ſaid Julia, that we were not brought up in thoſe venal religions, which murder people to inherit their wealth; and who, ſelling heaven to the rich, would extend even to the other world that unjuſt inequality which prevails in this. I do not at all doubt that ſuch mournful ideas encourage infidelity, and create a natural averſion for that ſpecies of worſhip which adopts them. I hope, continued ſhe, looking ſtedfaſtly at me, that he who may educate our children will adopt very different maxims; and that he will not repreſent religion to them as a mournful exerciſe, by continually ſetting before them the proſpect of death. If they learn once but to live well, they will of themſelves know how to die.

In the continuation of this diſcourſe, which became leſs affecting and more interrupted than I ſhall tell you, I fully comprehended the maxims of Julia, and the conduct at which I had been ſurpriſed. It appeared, that, perceiving her ſituation quite deſperate, ſhe contrived only to remove that uſeleſs and mournful appearance

which the fear of moſt perſons when dying makes them put on. This ſhe did, either to divert our affliction, or to baniſh from her own view a ſpectacle ſo moving, and at the ſame time unneceſſary. Death, ſaid ſhe, is of itſelf ſufficiently painful! why muſt it be rendered hideous? The care which others throw away in endeavouring to prolong their lives, I will employ to enjoy mine to the laſt moment. Shall I make an hoſpital of my apartment, a ſcene of diſguſt and trouble, when my laſt care will be to aſſemble in it all thoſe that are moſt dear to me? If I ſuffer the air to ſtagnate, I muſt baniſh my children, or expoſe their health to danger. If I put on a frightful dreſs and appearance myſelf, I ſhall be known no longer; I ſhall be no longer the ſame perſon; you will all remember to have loved me, and will be able to bear me no more. I ſhall, even alive, have the frightful ſpectacle of horror before me, which I ſhall be to my friends when I am dead. Inſtead of this, I have diſcovered the art to extend my life without prolonging it. I exiſt, I love, am loved, and live till the laſt breath forſakes me. The moment of death is nothing: the natural evil is a trifle; and I have overcome all thoſe of opinion.

This and a good deal of ſimilar diſcourſe paſſed between the patient, the miniſter, ſometimes the doctor, Fanny, and me. Mrs Orbe was preſent all the while, but never joined in the converſation. Attentive to the wants of her friend, ſhe was very aſſiduous to ſerve her when ſhe wanted any aſſiſtance; the reſt of the time ſhe remained immoveable, and almoſt inanimate;

mate; ſhe kept looking at her without ſpeaking, and without underſtanding any thing of what was ſaid.

As to myſelf; fearing that Julia would talk too much for her ſtrength, I took the opportunity of the miniſter and phyſician's talking to each other aſide, to tell her, in her ear, that ſhe talked a great deal for a ſick perſon, and reaſoned very profoundly for one who conceived herſelf incapable of reaſoning. Yes, replied ſhe, very low, I talk too much for a perſon that is ſick, but not for one that is dying; I ſhall very ſoon have nothing more to ſay. With reſpect to argument, I reaſon no more now; I have done with it. I have often reflected on my laſt illneſs; I am now to profit by my reflection. I am no longer capable of reflecting nor reſolving; I am now only able to talk of what I have before thought of, and to practiſe what I have formerly reſolved.

The remainder of the day paſſed away in nearly the ſame tranquillity, and almoſt in the ſame manner as if no ſick perſon was in the houſe. Julia, juſt as in full health, calm and reſigned, talked with the ſame good ſenſe and the ſame ſpirit; putting on, now and then, an air of ſerenity approaching even to ſprightlineſs. In ſhort, I continued to obſerve a certain appearance of joy in her eyes, which increaſed my uneaſineſs, and concerning which I was determined to come to an explanation.

I delayed it no longer than the ſame evening: when, ſeeing I had an inclination to be left alone with her, ſhe told me I had prevented her, for that ſhe had ſomething to ſay to me.

It is very well, replied I; but as I intimated my intention firſt, give me leave firſt to explain myſelf.

Then ſitting down by her and looking at her attentively, My Julia, ſaid I, my dear Julia, you have wounded my very ſoul. Yes, continued I, ſeeing her look upon me with ſome ſurpriſe, I have penetrated your ſentiments; you are glad to die, you rejoice to leave me. Reflect on my behaviour to you ſince we have lived together: have I ever deſerved on your part ſo cruel a deſire? At that inſtant ſhe claſped both my hands in her's, and with a voice that thrilled my ſoul, Who? I! ſaid ſhe, I glad to leave you! Is it thus you penetrate my ſentiments? Have you ſo ſoon forgot our converſation of yeſterday? At leaſt, interrupted I, you die content——I have ſeen——I ſee it, Hold, ſaid ſhe: it is indeed true, I die content; but it is content to die, as I have lived, worthy the name of your wife. Aſk of me no more, for I can tell you no more: but here, continued ſhe, taking a folded paper from under her pillow, here is what will unfold to you the myſtery. This paper was a letter which I ſaw was directed to you. I give it to you open, added ſhe, giving it into my hands, that, after having read it, you will determine within yourſelf, either to ſend or ſuppreſs it, according as you think beſt. I deſire, however, you will not read it till I am no more; and I am certain you will grant that requeſt. This letter, my dear St Preux, you will find incloſed. She who wrote it, I well know, is dead; but I can hardly bring myſelf to believe that ſhe no longer exiſts.

She

She queſtioned me afterwards, expreſſing great uneaſineſs about her father. Is it poſſible, ſaid ſhe, that he ſhould know his daughter to be in danger, and ſhe not hear from him! Has any misfortune happened to him? or has he ceaſed to love me? Can it be that my father, ſo tender a father, ſhould thus abandon his child? that he ſhould let me die without ſeeing him; without receiving his laſt bleſſing; without embracing him in my laſt moments? Good God! how bitterly will he reproach himſelf, when he comes to find that he will ſee me no more!—— This reflection ſo extremely afflicted her, that I judged ſhe would be leſs affected to know her father was ill than to ſuſpect his indifference. I therefore determined to acquaint her with the truth, and in fact found her more eaſy than under her firſt ſuſpicions. The thoughts of never ſeeing him again, however, much affected her. Alas! ſaid ſhe, what will become of him when I am gone? Shall he live to ſurvive his whole family! What a life of ſolitude will his be? It is impoſſible he ſhould long ſurvive! At this moment nature reſumed its empire, and the horrors of approaching death were extremely perceptible. She ſighed, claſped her hands, lifted up her eyes to heaven; and, I ſaw plainly, endeavoured to pray, with all that difficulty which ſhe before obſerved always attended the prayers of the ſick.

When it was over, ſhe turned to me; and, complaining that ſhe felt herſelf very weak, told me, ſhe foreſaw this would be the laſt time we ſhould have an opportunity of converſing together. I conjure you, therefore, continued ſhe,

by our ſacred union, in the name of thoſe dear infants, the pledges of our love, harbour no longer ſuch unjuſt ſuſpicions of your wife. Can I rejoice to leave you? You, the buſineſs of whoſe life it has been to inſtruct and make me happy; you, who of all the men in the world, were the moſt capable to make me ſo; you, with whom only perhaps I could have lived within the bounds of diſcretion and virtue! No! believe me, if I could ſet any value upon life, it would be that I might ſpend it with you. —Theſe words, pronounced with great tenderneſs, affected me to that degree, that as I preſſed her hands frequently with my lips, I found them wet with my tears. I never before thought my eyes made for weeping. Theſe tears were the firſt I ever ſhed ſince my birth, and ſhall be the laſt till the hour of my death. They were ſhed for Julia, in whom fled every thing on earth that could draw from me a tear.

This was a day of great fatigue for poor Julia. Her preparation of Mrs Orbe in the preceding night, her interview with the children in the morning, that with the miniſter in the afternoon, together with the above converſation with me in the evening, had quite exhauſted her. She betook herſelf to reſt, and ſleeped better that night than on the preceding, whether on account of her laſſitude, or that in fact her fever and paroxyſms were leſs violent.

Early the next morning, word was brought me that a ſtranger, very indifferently dreſſed, deſired very earneſtly to ſpeak particularly to Julia: and though he was informed of her ſituation, he ſtill continued his importunity, ſaying,

his

his buſineſs related to an act of great charity, that he knew Mrs Wolmar very well, and that while ſhe had life remaining, ſhe would take pleaſure in exerting her benevolence. As Julia had eſtabliſhed it as an inviolable rule, that no perſon, particularly ſuch as appeared to be in diſtreſs, ſhould be turned away, the ſervants brought me word of the man and his requeſt: on which I ordered him in. His appearance was mean to the greateſt degree, being clothed almoſt in rags, and having in his air and manner all the ſymptoms of indigence. I did not obſerve, however, any thing further either in his looks or diſcourſe to make me ſuſpicious of him; though he ſtill perſiſted in his reſolution of telling his buſineſs to none but Julia. I told him, that if it related to any remedy he might be poſſeſſed of to ſave her life, I would give him all the recompenſe he might expect from her, without troubling her in her preſent extremity. No, Sir, replied he, poor as I am, I deſire not your money. I demand only what belongs to me, what I eſteem beyond all the treaſures on earth, what I have loſt by my own folly, and what Mrs Wolmar alone, to whom I owe it, can a ſecond time reſtore.

This diſcourſe, though unintelligible, determined me, however, what to do. A deſigning knave might indeed have ſaid as much, but he could never have ſaid it in the ſame manner. He required that none of the ſervants ſhould be preſent, a precaution which ſeemed myſterious and ſtrange; I indulged him, and introduced him to Julia. He had ſaid that he was known to Mrs Orbe; he paſſed by her, however, with-

without her taking notice of him, at which I was a little ſurpriſed. Julia recollected him immediately. Their meeting was extremely affecting. Clara, hearing a noice, came forward, and ſoon remembered her old acquaintance, not without ſome tokens of joy; but theſe were ſoon checked by her affliction. One ſentiment only engroſſed her attention, and her heart was inſenſible to every thing elſe.

It is needleſs, I imagine, to tell you who this perſon was; a thouſand ideas will riſe up in your memory and ſuggeſt it. But whilſt Julia was comforting him, however, ſhe was ſeized with a violent ſtoppage of her breath, and became ſo ill that we thought ſhe was going to expire. To prevent any farther ſurpriſe or diſtraction, at a time when her relief only was to be thought on, I put the man into the cloſet, and bid him lock himſelf in. Fanny was then called up, and after ſome time Julia recovered from her fit; when, looking round and ſeeing us all in a conſternation about her, ſhe ſaid, Never mind, children, this is only an eſſay; it is nothing like ſo painful as one would think.

All was ſoon tranquil again; but the alarm was ſo great, that I quite forgot the man in the cloſet, till Julia whiſpered me to know what was become of him. This was not, however, till dinner was ſerved up and we were all ſat down to table. I would have gone into the cloſet to ſpeak to him, but he had locked the door on the inſide as I had directed him; I was obliged, therefore, to have patience till after dinner.

During our repaſt, du Boſſon, who dined with us, ſpeaking of a young widow who was going

going to marry again, made ſome reflections on the misfortunes of widows in general; to which, I replied, the fortune of thoſe was ſtill harder who were widows while their huſbands were living. That, indeed, Sir, anſwered Fanny, who ſaw this diſcourſe was directed to her, is too true, eſpecially if ſuch huſbands are beloved. The converſation then turned upon her's; and, as ſhe always ſpoke of him very affectionately, it was natural for her to do ſo now, at a time when the loſs of a benefactreſs threatened to make that of her huſband ſtill more ſevere. This indeed ſhe did in the moſt affecting terms, commending the natural goodneſs of his diſpoſition, lamenting the bad examples by which he had been ſeduced, and ſo ſincerely regretting his loſs, that, being ſufficiently diſpoſed before to ſorrow, ſhe burſt out into a flood of tears. At this inſtant the cloſet-door flew open, and the poor man, ruſhing out, threw himſelf at her feet, embraced her knees, and mingled his tears with her's. She was holding a glaſs in her hand, which immediately fell to the ground; while the poor creature was ſo affected with joy and ſurpriſe that ſhe had fallen into a fit, had not proper care been inſtantly taken to prevent it.

What followed is eaſily imagined. It was known in a moment over the whole houſe that Claude Anet was come, the huſband of our good Fanny! What a feſtival! He was hardly got out of the chamber before he was ſtripped of his tatters and dreſſed in a decent manner. Had each of the ſervants had but two ſhirts a-piece, Anet would ſoon have had as many as them all. They had indeed ſo far prevented

me,

me, that, when I went out with a deſign to get him equipped, I was obliged to make uſe of my authority to make them take back the cloaths they had furniſhed him.

In the mean time, Fanny would not leave her miſtreſs. In order, however, to give her an opportunity of an hour or two's converſation with her huſband, we pretended the children wanted to take an airing, and ſent them both to take care of them.

This ſcene did not diſturb Julia ſo much as the preceding ones. There was nothing in it diſagreeable, and it rather did her good than harm. Clara and I paſſed the afternoon with her by ourſelves, and had two hours of calm uninterrupted converſation, which ſhe rendered the moſt agreeable and intereſting of any we had ever experienced in our lives.

She began with ſome obſervations on the affecting ſcene we had juſt beheld, and which recalled ſtrongly to her mind the times of her early youth. Then, following the order of events, ſhe made a ſhort recapitulation of the incidents of her life; with a view to ſhew, that, taking it for all in all, ſhe had been fortunate and happy; that ſhe had riſen gradually to the higheſt pinnacle of earthly happineſs; and that the accident, which now cut her off in the middle of her days, ſeemed in all appearance, according to the natural courſe of things, to mark the point of ſeparation between the good and evil of mortal life.

She expreſſed her gratitude to heaven in that it had been pleaſed to give her a ſuſceptible and benevolent heart, a ſound underſtanding, and an

an agreeable perſon; in that it had been pleaſed to give her birth in a land of liberty, and not in a country of ſlaves; that ſhe came of an honourable family, and not of an ignoble or criminal race; that ſhe was born to a moderate fortune, and not either to the ſuperfluous riches of the great, which corrupt the mind, or to the indigence of the poor, which debaſes it. She felicitated herſelf that ſhe was born of parents, both of them good and virtuous, replete with juſtice and honour, and who, tempering the faults of each other, had formed her judgment on theirs, without ſubjecting her to their foibles or prejudices. She boaſted the advantages ſhe had enjoyed, of being educated in a rational and holy religion; which, ſo far from debaſing, elevates and ennobles mankind; which, neither favouring impiety nor fanaticiſm, permits its profeſſors to make uſe at the ſame time both of faith and reaſon, to be at once both devout and humane.

Then, preſſing the hand of Clara, which ſhe conſtantly held in her's, and looking at her with the moſt affecting tenderneſs, All theſe bleſſings, ſaid ſhe, I have enjoyed in common with others; but this one—this, heaven reſerved for me alone; I am a woman, and yet have known a true friend. Heaven gave us birth at the ſame time; it gave us a ſimilarity of inclinations, which has ſubſiſted to this hour: it formed our hearts one for the other; it united us in the cradle; I have been bleſſed with her friendſhip during my life, and her kind hand will cloſe my eyes in death. Find another example like this in the world, and I have no longer any thing to boaſt.

boaſt. What prudent advice hath ſhe not given me? from what perils hath ſhe not ſaved me? under what afflictions hath ſhe not comforted me? what ſhould I indeed have been without her? what ſhould I not have been, had I liſtened more attentively to her counſel. Clara, inſtead of replying, leaned her head on the breaſt of her friend, and would have ſtifled her ſighs by her tears; but it was impoſſible. Julia embraced her with the moſt cordial affection, and for a long time a ſcene of tearleſs ſilence ſucceeded.

When they recovered themſelves, Julia continued her diſcourſe. Theſe bleſſings, ſaid ſhe, were mixed with their inconveniences; ſuch is the lot of humanity! My heart was made for love; difficult as to perſonal merit, but indifferent to that of opinion, it was morally impoſſible that my father's prejudices ſhould ever agree with my inclinations. My heart required a lover of its own peculiar choice. Such a one offered himſelf: I made choice of him; or rather heaven ſo directed my choice, that though a ſlave to paſſion, I ſhould not be abandoned to the horrors of my guilt, and that the love of virtue ſhould ſtill keep poſſeſſion of my heart, even after I was criminal. He made uſe of the ſpecious inſinuating language of virtue, by which a thouſand baſe men daily ſeduce our ſex; but perhaps he only of all mankind was ſincere. Did I then know his heart? ah! no. I then knew no more of him than his profeſſions, and yet I was ſeduced. I did that through deſpair which others have done through wantonneſs; I even threw myſelf, as my father reproached me, into his arms; and yet he loved and reſpected

ſpected me: by that reſpect alone I began to know him truly. Every man capable of ſuch behaviour muſt have a noble ſoul. Then, I might ſafely have truſted him; but I had done that before, and afterwards ventured to truſt in my own ſtrength, and ſo was deceived.

She then went on to laviſh encomiums on the merit of this unhappy lover: I will not ſay ſhe did him more than juſtice, but the pleaſure ſhe took in it was very obvious. She even praiſed him at her own expence; and by endeavouring to be juſt to him, was unjuſt to herſelf. She went even ſo far as to maintain, that he held adultery in greater horror than ſhe did; forgetting that he himſelf had diſproved any ſuch ſuggeſtion.

All the other incidents of her life were related in the ſame ſpirit. The behaviour of Lord B——, her huſband, her children, your return, our friendſhip, every thing was ſet in the moſt favourable light. She recapitulated even her misfortunes with pleaſure, as accidents which had prevented greater misfortunes. She loſt her mother at a time when that loſs was peculiarly felt; but if heaven had been pleaſed to ſpare her, a diſturbance, fatal to the peace of her family, might have been the conſequence. The aſſiſtance of her mother, feeble as it was, would have been ſufficient to ſtrengthen her reſolution to reſiſt the will of her father; whence family-diſcord and ſcandal would have ariſen, perhaps ſome diſaſter or diſhonour, and perhaps ſtill worſe if her brother had lived. She had married a man againſt her own inclination, whom ſhe did not love; and yet ſhe maintained, that ſhe could not have been ſo happy with

any other man, not even with the object of her paſſion. The death of Mr Orbe had deprived her of a friend in the huſband, but had reſtored to her a more amiable one in the wife. She even went ſo far as to include her uneaſineſs, her pains, in the number of bleſſings, as they had ſerved to prevent her heart from being hardened againſt the ſufferings of others. It is unknown, ſaid ſhe, the delight of bemoaning our own misfortunes or thoſe of others. A ſuſceptible mind finds a contentment in itſelf, independant of fortune. How deeply have I ſighed! how bitterly have I wept! and yet, were I to paſs my life again, the evil I have committed would be all that I would wiſh retrenched; that which I have ſuffered would be again agreeable. Theſe, St Preux, were her own words; when you have read her letter, they will perhaps ſeem more intelligible.

Thus, continued ſhe, you ſee to what felicity I was arrived. I enjoyed a conſiderable ſhare of happineſs, and had ſtill more in view. The increaſing proſperity of my family, the virtuous education of my children, all that I held dear in the world, aſſembled, or ready to be aſſembled around me. The time preſent and the future equally flattering, enjoyment and hope united to complete my happineſs. Thus raiſed to the pinnacle of earthly bliſs, I could not but deſcend; as it came before it was expected, it would have taken its flight while I was delighted in the thoughts of its duration. What could Providence have done to have ſuſtained me on the ſummit of felicity? a permanent ſituation is not the lot of mankind; no, when we have acquired

quired every thing, we muſt loſe ſomething, though it were from no other cauſe than that the pleaſure of enjoyment diminiſhes by poſſeſſion. My father is already in the decline of life; my children of an age when life is very uncertain: how many loſſes might not hereafter afflict me, without my having it in my power to repair, or conſole myſelf under, one! A mother's affection conſtantly increaſes, whilſt the tenderneſs of her offspring diminiſhes in proportion as they are abſent, or reſide at a diſtance from her. Mine, as they grow up, would be taken from me: they would live in the great world, and might neglect me. You intend to ſend one of them to Ruſſia; how many tears would not his departure and abſence coſt me! all by degrees would be detached from me, and I ſhould have nothing to ſupply their loſs. How often ſhould I find myſelf in the ſituation in which I now am going to leave you! and after all, I muſt ſtill die; die perhaps the laſt of you all, alone and forſaken! The longer one lives, the more deſirous we are of living, even when our enjoyments are at an end: hence I might ſurvive till life became a burden, and yet ſhould fear to die; it is the ordinary conſequence of old age. Inſtead of that, my laſt moments are now agreeable; and I have ſtrength to reſign myſelf to death, if death it may be called to leave behind us what we love. No, my friends, my children, think not that I ſhall leave you; I will remain with you; in leaving you thus united, my heart, my ſoul, will ſtill reſide among you; you will ſee me continually among you; you will perceive me perpetually near you——The time

will alſo come when we ſhall be united again; nor ſhall the virtuous Wolmar himſelf eſcape me. My return to God ſpeaks peace to my ſoul, and ſweetens the bitter moment that approaches; it promiſes me for you alſo the ſame felicity. I have been happy, I am ſtill happy, and am going to be ſo for ever; my happineſs is determined, beyond the power of fortune, to all eternity.

Juſt then the miniſter entered. Julia was truly the object of his reſpect and eſteem; nobody knowing better than he the livelineſs and ſincerity of her belief. He was but too much affected with the converſation he had held with her the day before, and above all with the ſerenity and fortitude he had obſerved in her. He had often ſeen perſons die with oſtentation, but never with ſuch calmneſs. Perhaps alſo to the intereſt he took in her ſituation was added a little curioſity to ſee whether ſuch her uncommon ſerenity would continue to the laſt.

Julia had no occaſion to change the ſubject of diſcourſe to render it more agreeable to the character of our viſitor. As her converſation when in health was never on frivolous topics, ſo now ſhe continued on her ſick-bed, to talk over with the ſame tranquillity ſuch ſubjects as ſhe thought moſt intereſting to herſelf and her friends; ſpeaking indifferently on matters in themſelves by no means indifferent.

Thus, following the chain of her ideas relative to her notions of remaining with her friends; the diſcourſe turned on the ſituation of the ſoul ſeparated from the body: when ſhe took occaſion to admire the ſimplicity of ſuch perſons,

perſons, who promiſed on their death-beds to come back to their friends, and bring them news of the other world. This, continued ſhe, is juſt as reaſonable, as the ſtories of ghoſts and apparitions, that are ſaid to commit a thouſand diſorders, and torment credulous good women; as if departed ſpirits had lungs to ſcold and hands to fight with. How is it poſſible for a pure ſpirit to act upon a ſoul incloſed in a body, and which, by virtue of its union with ſuch body, can perceive nothing but by means of the corporeal organs? This is not to be conceived. I muſt confeſs, however, I ſee nothing abſurd in ſuppoſing that the ſoul, when delivered from the body, ſhould return, wander about, or perhaps reſide near the perſons of ſuch as were dear to it in life: not indeed to inform them of its exiſtence; it has no means of communicating ſuch information; neither can it act on us, or perceive what we act, for want of the organs of ſenſe neceſſary to that end; but methinks it might become acquainted with our thoughts and perceptions, by an immediate communication ſimilar to that by which the Deity is privy to all our thoughts, and by which we reciprocally read the thoughts of each other, in coming face to face: for, added ſhe, turning to the miniſter, of what uſe can the ſenſes be when there is nothing for them to do? The Supreme Being is neither ſeen nor underſtood; he only makes himſelf felt; he ſpeaks neither to the eyes nor the ears, but only to the heart.

I underſtood, by the anſwer of the paſtor, and from ſome ſigns which paſſed between them, that the reſurrection of the body had been one

of the points on which they had formerly diſputed. I perceived alſo that I now began to give more attention to the articles of Julia's religion, where her faith ſeemed to approach the bounds of reaſon.

She ſeemed to take ſo much pleaſure in theſe notions, that, had ſhe not been pre-determined to abide by her former opinions, it had been cruelty to endeavour to invalidate one that ſeemed ſo agreeable to her in her preſent condition. What an additional pleaſure, ſaid ſhe, have I not an hundred times taken, in doing a good action, in the imagination that my good mother was preſent, and that ſhe knew the heart and approved the intentions of her daughter! there is ſomething ſo comfortable in the thoughts of living under the eyes of thoſe who were dear to us, that, with reſpect to ourſelves, they can hardly be ſaid to be deceaſed. You may judge whether Clara's hand was not frequently preſſed during this diſcourſe.

The miniſter had replied hitherto with a good deal of complacency and moderation; he took care, however, not to forget his profeſſion for a moment, but oppoſed her ſentiments on the buſineſs of another life. He told her the immenſity, glory, and other attributes of God, would be the only objects which the ſouls of the bleſſed would be employed in contemplating: that ſuch ſublime contemplation would efface every other idea; that we ſhould ſee nothing, that we ſhould remember nothing, even in heaven; but that the thoughts of every thing earthly would be ſwallowed up in the raviſhing proſpect.

That may well be, returned Julia; there is ſuch

ſuch an immenſe diſtance between the lowneſs of our thoughts and the divine eſſence, that we cannot judge what effect it may have on us when we are in a ſituation to contemplate its beauty. But, as I have hitherto been able to reaſon only from my ideas, I muſt confeſs that I leave ſome perſons ſo dear to me, that it would grieve me much to think I ſhould never remember them more. One part of my happineſs, ſay I, will conſiſt in the teſtimony of a good conſcience; I ſhall certainly remember then how I have acted on earth: if I remember this, I cannot forget thoſe perſons who were dear to me; who muſt be ſtill ſo: to ſee * them no more, then, will be a pain to me; and pain enters not into the manſions of the bleſſed. But if, after all, I am miſtaken, ſays ſhe, ſmiling, a miſtake for a day or two will be ſoon at an end. I ſhall know, Sir, in a ſhort time, more on this ſubject than even yourſelf. In the mean time, this I am well aſſured of, that ſo long as I remember that I have lived on earth, ſo long ſhall I eſteem thoſe I loved there, among whom my worthy paſtor will not have the loweſt place.

In this manner paſſed the converſation all that day, during which Julia appeared to have more eaſe, more hope and aſſurance than ever, ſeeming, in the opinion of the miniſter, to enjoy a foretaſte of that happineſs ſhe was going to par-

* It is almoſt needleſs to obſerve, that by the word *ſee* is here meant purely an act of the intellect, ſuch as that whereby we are ſaid to ſee the Deity, and the Deity to ſee us. We cannot *perceive* the immediate communication of ſpirits; but we can *conceive* it very well; and better, in my opinion, than the communication of motion between bodies.

partake among the bleſſed. Never did ſhe appear more tender, more amiable, in a word, more herſelf, than at this time: always ſenſible, ſentimental, poſſeſſing the fortitude of the philoſopher and the mildneſs of a Chriſtian. Nothing of affectation, nothing aſſuming or ſententious, eſcaped her; her expreſſion always dictated by her ſentiments, with the greateſt ſimplicity of heart. If ſometimes ſhe ſtifled the complaints which her ſufferings might have drawn from her, it was not through affectation of a ſtoical intrepidity, but to prevent thoſe who were about her from being afflicted; and when the pangs of approaching death triumphed over her ſtrength, ſhe ſtrove not to hide her ſufferings, but permitted us to comfort her, and, when ſhe recovered from them a little, comforted us in her turn. In the intervals of her pain, ſhe was chearful, but her chearfulneſs was extremely affecting; a ſmile ſitting frequently on her lips, while the eye ran over with tears. To what purpoſe is that terror which permits us not to enjoy what we are going ſpeedily to loſe? Julia was even more pleaſing, more amiable than when in health; and the laſt day of her life was the moſt glorious of all.

Towards the evening ſhe had another fit, which, though not ſo ſevere as that in the morning, would not permit us to leave the children long with her. She remarked, however, that Harriot looked changed; and though we accounted for it, by ſaying ſhe wept much and eat little, ſhe ſaid, No, her illneſs was in the blood.

Finding herſelf better, ſhe would have us ſup in

in her own chamber; the doctor being ſtill with her. Fanny alſo, whom we always uſed to ſend for when we choſe ſhe ſhould dine or ſup at our table, came up unſent for; which Julia perceiving, ſhe ſmiled and ſaid, Yes, child, come, you ſhall ſup with me to-night; you may have your huſband longer than you will have your miſtreſs. Then turning to me, ſhe ſaid, I ſhall have no need to recommend Claude Anet to your protection. No, replied I, whoſoever you have honoured with your benevolence needs no other recommendation to me.

Julia, finding ſhe could bear the light, had the table brought near the bed; and what is hardly to be conceived of one in her ſituation, ſhe had an appetite. The phyſician, who ſaw no danger in gratifying her, offered her a bit of chicken; which ſhe refuſed, but deſired a bit of fiſh, which ſhe eat with a little bread, and ſaid it was very good. While ſhe was eating, you ſhould have ſeen the looks of Mrs Orbe; you ſhould have ſeen, I ſay, for it is impoſſible to deſcribe them. What ſhe eat was ſo far from doing her harm, that ſhe ſeemed the better for it during the remainder of the repaſt. She was even in ſuch good humour as to take upon her to complain that we had been ſo long without wine. Bring, ſays ſhe, a bottle of Spaniſh wine for theſe gentlemen. By the looks of the phyſician, ſhe ſaw he expected to taſte ſome genuine Spaniſh wine; and caſting her eyes at Clara, ſmiled at the conceit. In the mean time, Clara, without giving attention to that circumſtance, looked with extreme concern, ſometimes at Julia, and then on Fanny, of whom her eyes

ſeemed

ſeemed to ſay, or aſk ſomething which I could not underſtand.

The wine did not come ſo ſoon as was expected; the valet-de chambre, who was entruſted with the key of the cellar, having taken it away through miſtake. On inquiry, indeed, it was found that the proviſion intended for one day had laſted five; and that the key was gone without any body's perceiving the want of it, notwithſtanding the family had ſat up ſeveral nights. The phyſician was amazed; and for my part, at a loſs whether I ſhould attribute this forgetfulneſs to the concern or the ſobriety of the ſervants, I was aſhamed to make uſe of ordinary precautions with ſuch domeſtics, and therefore ordered the door of the cellar to be broke open, and that for the future every one might drink at their diſcretion.

At length a bottle was brought us, and the wine proved excellent; when the patient having a mind to taſte it, deſired ſome mixed with water; on which the doctor gave her a glaſs, and ordered her to drink it unmixed. Clara and Fanny now caſt their eyes more frequently at each other, but with looks timid and conſtrained, as if they were fearful of ſaying too much.

Her faſting, weakneſs, and ordinary way of living, made the wine have a great effect on Julia. She perceived it, and ſaid ſhe was intoxicated. After having deferred it ſo long, ſaid ſhe, it was hardly worth while to begin to make me tipſy now, for a drunken woman is a moſt odious ſight. In fact, ſhe began to prattle, ſenſibly however as uſual, but with more vivacity than before. It was aſtoniſhing, never-

vertheleſs, that her colour was not heightened; her eyes ſparkled only with a fire moderated by the languor of her illneſs; and, excepting her paleneſs, ſhe looked to be in full health. Clara's emotion became now extremely viſible. She caſt a timid look alternately on Julia, on me, on Fanny, and, above all, on the phyſician; theſe were all expreſſive of ſo many interrogatories which ſhe was deſirous but fearful to make. One would have thought every moment that ſhe was going to ſpeak, but that the fear of a diſagreeable reply prevented her: indeed her diſquietude appeared at length ſo great, that it ſeemed oppreſſive.

Fanny, encouraged by all theſe ſigns, and willing to relieve her, attempted to ſpeak, but with a trembling voice, faultering out that her miſtreſs ſeemed to have been in leſs pain to-day ——that her laſt convulſion was not ſo ſtrong as the preceding——that the evening ſeemed —and there ſhe ſtopped. Clara, who trembled like a leaf while Fanny was ſpeaking, now fixed her eyes on the phyſician, liſtening with all her attention, and hardly venturing to breathe, leſt ſhe ſhould not perfectly underſtand what he was going to ſay.

A man muſt have been ſtupid not to have gueſſed the meaning of all this. Du Boſſon got up, felt the pulſe of the patient, and ſaid, Here is neither intoxication nor fever; the pulſe promiſes well. Clara roſe up in a moment, and, addreſſing the doctor with the utmoſt impatience, would have interrogated him more particularly, but her ſpeech failed her. How, Sir! ſaid ſhe—the pulſe! the fever! ſhe could ſay no

no more; but her eyes ſparkled with impatience, and not a muſcle in her face but indicated the moſt diſquieting curioſity.

The doctor, however, made no anſwer; but took up the patient's hand again, examined her eyes and her tongue, and having ſtood ſilent a while, ſaid, I underſtand you, Madam; but it is impoſſible for me to ſay any thing poſitively at preſent; only this, that if the patient is in the ſame ſituation at this hour to-morrow morning, I will anſwer for her life. The words had ſcarce dropt from his lips, before Clara, ruſhing forward quick as lightning, overturned two chairs and almoſt the table to get at him, when ſhe hung round his neck and kiſſed him a hundred times, ſobbing and bathing his face with her tears. With the ſame impetuoſity ſhe took a ring of value from her finger, and put it forcibly on his, crying out, as well as ſhe could, quite out of breath, O Sir! if you do but reſtore her to us, it is not one life only you will be ſo happy as to ſave.

Julia ſaw and heard this, which greatly affected her. Looking on her friend, therefore, ſhe thus broke out in a ſorrowful and moving tone: Cruel Clara! how you make me regret the loſs of life! are you reſolved to make me die in deſpair? muſt you be a ſecond time prepared? Theſe few words were like a clap of thunder; they immediately extinguiſhed her tranſports, but could not quite ſtifle her rekindled hopes.

In an inſtant, the doctor's reply to Mrs Orbe was known throughout the houſe, and the honeſt domeſtics already conceited their miſtreſs half reſtored

reſtored. They unanimouſly reſolved, therefore, to make the doctor a preſent on her recovery, to which each contributed three months wages, and the money was immediately put into the hands of Fanny; ſome borrowing of the others what they wanted to make up their quota of the ſum. This agreement was made with ſo much eagerneſs and haſte, that Julia heard in her bed the noiſe of their acclamations. Think, my friend, what an effect this muſt have had on the heart of a woman who felt herſelf dying. She made a ſign to me to come near, and whiſpered in my ear; See how they make me drink to the very bottom that bitter yet ſweet cup of ſenſibility!

When it was time to retire, Mrs Orbe, who ſtill partook of her couſin's bed, called her woman, to ſit up that night to relieve Fanny: the latter however objected to that propoſal, and ſeemingly with greater earneſtneſs than ſhe would have done had not her huſband been come. Mrs Orbe perſiſted notwithſtanding in her deſign, and both of them paſſed the night together in the cloſet. I ſat up in the next chamber; but the hopes which the domeſtics entertained, had ſo animated their zeal, that neither perſuaſions nor threats could prevail on one of them to go to bed that night. Thus the whole houſe ſat up all night under ſo much impatience, that there was not one of the family who would not have glady given a whole year of his life to have had it nine o'clock in the morning.

I frequently heard them walking in her chamber, during the night, which did not diſturb

me; but toward the morning, when things seemed more quiet and still, I was alarmed at a low, indistinct noise that seemed to come from Julia's room. I listened, and thought I could now distinguish the groans of a person in extremity. I ran into the room, threw open the curtain, and there———O St Preux! there I saw them both, those amiable friends, motionless, locked in each other's embrace, the one fainted away and the other expiring. I cried out, and hastened to prevent or receive her last sigh; but it was too late; Julia was no more.

I can give you no account of what passed for some hours afterwards; being ignorant of what befel myself during that time. As soon as I was a little recovered from my first surprise, I inquired after Mrs Orbe; and learned that the servants were obliged to carry her into her own chamber, where at last they were forced to confine her to prevent her returning into that of Julia; which she had several times done, throwing herself on the body, embracing, chafing, and kissing it in a kind of phrenzy, and exclaiming aloud in a thousand passionate expressions of fruitless despair.

On entering her apartment, I found her absolutely frantic, neither seeing nor minding any thing, knowing nobody, but running about the room, and wringing her hands, sometimes muttering in a hollow voice some extravagant words, and at others sending forth such terrible shrieks as to make one shudder with horror. On the feet of the bed sat her woman, frightened out of her wits, not daring to breathe or stir, but seeking to hide herself and trembling every limb.

In

In fact, the convulſions, which at this time agitated the unhappy Clara, had ſomething in them moſt terrifying. I made a ſign that her woman ſhould retire; fearing leſt a ſingle word of conſolation, untimely offered, might have put her into an actual fury.

I did not attempt therefore to ſpeak to her; as ſhe could neither have liſtened to or underſtood me; but obſerving, after ſome time, that her ſtrength was quite exhauſted with fatigue, I placed her on a ſettee; then ſitting down by her and holding her hands, I ordered the children to be brought in and called them round her. Unhappily the firſt ſhe took notice of was him that was the innocent cauſe of her friend's death. The ſight of him, I could ſee, made her tremble; her countenance changed, ſhe turned away her looks from him in a kind of horror, and ſtruggled to get her hands looſe to puſh him from her. I called him then to me. Unfortunate boy! ſaid I; for having been too dear to the one, you are become hateful to the other: it is plain their hearts were not in every thing alike. She was extremely angry at what I ſaid, and retorted it ſeverely: it had nevertheleſs its effect in the impreſſion it made on her. For ſhe immediately took the child up in her arms, and attempted to kiſs him, but could not, and ſet him down again immediately. She did not even look upon him with the ſame pleaſure as on the other, and I am very glad it is not this boy which is intended for her daughter.

Ye ſuſceptible minds! what would you have done in my ſituation? You would have acted like Mrs Orbe. After having taken care of the

children, and of Clara, and given the neceſſary orders about the funeral, it was neceſſary for me to take my horſe, and be the ſorrowful meſſenger of the heavy tidings to an unhappy father. I found him ſtill in pain from his hurt, as well as greatly uneaſy and troubled about the accident which had befallen his daughter. I left him overwhelmed with ſorrow: with the ſorrow of the aged, which breaks not out into external appearances, which excites neither tranſport nor exclamation, but preys inwardly and fatally on the heart. That he will never overcome his grief I am certain, and I can plainly foreſee the laſt ſtroke that is wanting to complete the misfortune of his friend. The next day I made all poſſible haſte, in order to be at home early, and pay the laſt honours to the worthieſt of women; but all was not yet over. She muſt be made to revive, to afflict me with the loſs of her a ſecond time.

As I drew near my houſe, I ſaw one of my people come running out to meet me, who cried out from as far as he could be heard; Sir, Sir, make haſte, make haſte, my miſtreſs is not dead. I could not comprehend what he meant; but made all the haſte I could, and found the court-yard full of people, crying for joy and calling out aloud for bleſſings on Mrs Wolmar. I aſked the reaſon of all this; every one was tranſported with joy, but nobody could give me a reaſonable anſwer; for as to my own people, their heads were abſolutely turned. I made the beſt of my way therefore to Julia's apartment, where I found more than twenty perſons on their knees round the bed, with their eyes attentively

tentively fixed on the corpſe, which, to my great ſurpriſe, I ſaw dreſſed out and lying on the bed. My heart fluttered, and I examined into her ſituation: but alas! ſhe was dead and cold! This moment of falſe hope, ſo ſoon and ſo cruelly extinguiſhed, was the moſt afflicting moment of my whole life. I am not apt to be cholerick; but I found myſelf on this occaſion extremely angry, and reſolved to come at the bottom of this extravagant ſcene. But all was ſo diſguiſed, ſo altered, ſo changed, that I had the greateſt difficulty in the world to come at the truth. At length, however, I unravelled the myſtery.

My father-in-law, being alarmed at the accident he had heard, and thinking he could ſpare his valet-de-chamber, had ſent him over before my arrival to learn the ſituation of his daughter. This old ſervant, being fatigued with riding on horſeback, had taken a boat, and, croſſing the lake in the night, arrived at Clarens the very morning of the day in which I returned. On his arrival he ſaw the univerſal conſternation the houſe was in; and, learning the cauſe, went ſobbing up to Julia's apartment; where, throwing himſelf on his knees, by the bed-ſide, he weeped and contemplated the features of his departed miſtreſs. Then giving vent to his ſorrows, he cried out, Ah! my good miſtreſs! ah! why did it not pleaſe God to take me inſtead of you! me, that am old, that have no connections, that can be of no more ſervice on the face of the earth! but to take you in the flower of youth, the pride of your family, the bleſſing of your houſe, the hope

of the unfortunate, alas! was I preſent at your birth, thus to behold you dead!—

In the midſt of theſe and ſuch like exclamations, which flowed from the goodneſs and ſincerity of his heart, the weak old man, who kept his eyes ſtill fixed on the corpſe, imagined he ſaw it move: having once taken this into his head, he imagined farther that Julia turned her eyes, looked at him, and made a ſign to him with her head. Upon this he roſe up in great tranſport, and ran up and down the houſe, crying out his miſtreſs was not dead, that ſhe knew him, and that he was ſure ſhe was living and would recover. This was ſufficient to call every body together; the ſervants, the neighbours, and the poor, who before made the air reſound with their lamentations, now all as loudly cried out in tranſport, She is not dead! ſhe lives! ſhe lives! The noiſe ſpread and increaſed; the common people, all fond of the marvellous, readily propagated the news: every one eaſily believed what he wiſhed might be true, and fought to give others pleaſure by countenancing the general credulity. So that, in a ſhort time, the deceaſed was reported not only to have made a motion with her head, but to have walked about, to have converſed, &c. more than twenty witneſſes having had ocular proofs of circumſtances that never happened or exiſted.

No ſooner were they poſſeſſed with the notion of her being alive, but a thouſand efforts were made to reſtore her; they preſſed in crowds about her bed, ſpoke to her, threw ſpirits in her face, felt for her pulſe, and did every thing their fooliſh apprehenſions ſuggeſted to recover her;

her; till her women, juſtly offended at ſeeing the body of their miſtreſs ſurrounded by a number of men, got every body turned out of the room, and ſoon convinced themſelves how eggregiouſly they had been deceived. Incapable, however, of reſolving to put an end to ſo agreeable an error, or perhaps ſtill hoping for ſome miraculous event, they cloathed the body with care, and though her wardrobe was left to them, they did not ſpare the richeſt apparel. After which laying her out on the bed, and leaving the curtains open, they returned to their tears amidſt the public rejoicings of the multitude.

I arrived in the height of this phrenzy, but when I became acquainted with the cauſe, found it impoſſible to bring the crowd to reaſon; and that if I had ſhut up my doors, and had ordered the immediate burial of the corpſe, it might have occaſioned ſome diſturbance; or that I ſhould have paſſed, at leaſt, for a parricide of a huſband, who had buried his wife alive, and ſhould have been held in deteſtation by the whole country. I reſolved therefore to defer the funeral. After ſix and thirty hours however, I found, by the extreme heat of the weather, the corpſe began to change, and, though the face preſerved its features and ſweetneſs, there ſeemed even there ſome ſigns of alteration. I mentioned it to Mrs Orbe, who ſat in a continued ſtupor, at the head of the bed. Not that ſhe was ſo happy as to be the dupe of ſo groſs a deluſion; but ſhe pretended to be ſo, that ſhe might continue in the chamber, and indulge her ſorrows.

She underſtood my deſign, and ſilently withdrew. In a moment after, however, ſhe returned, bringing in her hand that vail of gold tiſſue embroidered with pearls, which you brought her from the Indies *: when, coming up to the bed, ſhe kiſſed the vail, and ſpreading it over the face of her deceaſed friend, ſhe cried out with a ſhrill voice, "Accurſed be that ſacrilegious hand which ſhall preſume to lift up this vail! accurſed be that impious eye which ſhall dare to look on this diſfigured face!" This action and imprecation had ſuch an effect on the ſpectators, that, as if by a ſudden inſpiration, it was repeated by one and all from every quarter. Such an impreſſion indeed did it make on our ſervants and the people in general, that the deceaſed being put into the coffin, dreſſed as ſhe was, and with the greateſt caution, was carried away and buried in the ſame attire, without any perſon daring to touch the vail that covered her face.

Thoſe are certainly the moſt unhappy, who, beſide the ſupporting their own ſorrows, are under the neceſſity of conſoling others. Yet this is my taſk with my father-in-law, with Mrs Orbe, with friends, with relations, with my neighbours, and with my own houſehold. I could yet ſupport it well enough with all but my

* It is clearly to be ſeen that the dream of St Preux, of which Mrs Orbe's imagination was conſtantly full, ſuggeſted the expedient of the vail. I conceive alſo, that if we examine into matters of this kind ſtrictly, we ſhall find the ſame relation between many predictions and their accompliſhment. Events are not always predicted becauſe they are to happen; but they happen becauſe they were predicted.

my old friend and Mrs Orbe: but you muſt be a witneſs to the affliction of the latter to judge how much it adds to mine. So far from taking my endeavours to comfort her in good part, ſhe even reproaches me for them; my ſolicitude offends her, and the coldneſs of my affliction but aggravates her; ſhe would have my grief be as bitter and extravagant as her's; her barbarous affliction would gladly ſee the whole world in deſpair. Every thing ſhe ſays, every thing ſhe does, looks like madneſs; I am obliged therefore to put up with every thing, and am reſolved not to be offended. In ſerving her who was beloved by Julia, I conceive I do a greater honour to her memory than by fruitleſs tears and lamentations.

You will be able to judge, from one inſtance, of the reſt of her behaviour. I thought I had gained my point, by engaging her to take care of herſelf, in order to be able to diſcharge thoſe duties which her dying friend had impoſed on her. Reduced very low by convulſions, abſtinence, and want of reſt, ſhe ſeemed at length reſolved to attempt her uſual method of living, and to come to table in the dining-room. The firſt time, however, I ordered the children to dine in the nurſery, being unwilling to run the hazard of this eſſay, in their preſence: violent paſſions of every kind, being one of the moſt dangerous objects that can be ſhewn to children. For the paſſions, when exceſſive, have always ſomething puerile and diverting to young minds, by which they are ſeduced to admire what they ought to dread.

On entering the dining-room, ſhe caſt her eye

eye on the table, and ſaw covers laid for two perſons only; at which ſhe flung herſelf into the firſt chair that ſtood next her, refuſing to come to table. I imagined I knew the reaſon, and ordered a third plate to be ſet on the table, at the place where her couſin uſed generally to ſit. She then permitted me to lead her to her ſeat without reluctance, placing herſelf with great caution, and diſpoſing her gown as if ſhe was afraid to incommode the empty chair. On putting the firſt ſpoonful of ſoup to her mouth, however, ſhe withdrew it, and aſked with a peeviſh air, what buſineſs that plate had there when nobody made uſe of it? I anſwered, ſhe was in the right, and had it taken away. She then ſtrove to eat, but could get nothing down; by degrees her ſtomach ſwelled, her breath grew ſhort, and all at once ſhe ſtarted up and returned to her own chamber, without ſaying a word, or hearing any thing that I ſaid to her, obſtinately refuſing every thing but tea all that day.

The next day I had the ſame taſk to begin again. I now conceived the beſt way to bring her to reaſon was to humour her, and to endeavour to ſoften her deſpair by more tender ſentiments. You know how much her daughter reſembles Mrs Wolmar; that ſhe took a pleaſure in heightening that reſemblance, by dreſſing her in the ſame manner, having brought ſeveral cloaths for her from Geneva, in which ſhe uſed to dreſs her like Julia. I ordered Harriot therefore to be dreſſed, as much in imitation of Julia as poſſible; and, after having given her her leſſon, placed her at table where

Julia

Julia uſed to ſit; three covers being laid as the day before.

Clara immediately comprehended my deſign, and was affected, giving me a tender and obliging look. This was the firſt time ſhe ſeemed ſenſible of my aſſiduity, and I promiſed myſelf ſucceſs from the expedient. Harriot, proud to repreſent her little mamma, played her part extremely well; ſo well indeed, that I obſerved the ſervants in-waiting ſhed tears. She nevertheleſs always gave the name of mamma to her mother, and addreſſed her with proper reſpect. At length, encouraged by ſucceſs and my approbation, ſhe ventured to put her hand to the ſoup-ſpoon, and cried, *Clara, my dear, do you chuſe any of this!* The geſture, tone, and manner, in which ſhe ſpoke this, were ſo exactly like thoſe of Julia, that it made her mother tremble. A moment after, however, ſhe burſt into a fit of laughter, and offering her plate, replied, Yes, child, give me a little, you are a charming creature. She then began to eat with an eagerneſs that ſurpriſed me. Looking at her with ſome attention, I ſaw ſomething wild in her eyes, and a greater impatience in her action and manner than uſual. I prevented her therefore from eating any more, and it was well I did ſo; for, an hour after ſhe was taken extremely ill with a violent ſurfeit, which, had ſhe continued to eat more, might have been fatal. From this time I reſolved to try no more projects of this kind, as they might affect her imagination too much. Sorrow is more eaſily cured than madneſs; I thought it better therefore to let her

ſuffer

ſuffer under the one a little longer, than run the hazard of driving her into the other.

Such is the ſituation, my friend, in which we are at preſent. Since the baron's return, indeed, Clara goes up every morning to his apartment, whether I am at home or abroad; where they generally paſs an hour or two together. She begins alſo to take a little more notice of the children. One of them has been ſick; this accident has made her ſenſible that ſhe has ſtill ſomething to loſe, and has animated her zeal to the diſcharge of her duty. But, with all this, ſhe is not yet ſufficiently ſorrowful; her tears have not yet begun to flow; we wait for you to draw them forth, for you to dry them up again. You cannot but underſtand me. Think of the laſt advice of Julia; it was indeed firſt ſuggeſted by me, and I now think it more than ever prudent and uſeful. Come and be re-united to all that remains of Julia. Her father, her friend, her huſband, her children, all expect you, all deſire your company, as being neceſſary to us all.

In a word, without farther explanations, come, partake and cure us of our ſorrows; I ſhall perhaps be more obliged to you than to any other man on earth.

LETTER CLXII.

From JULIA.

This letter was incloſed in the preceding.

NOW are our projects at an end. Circumſtan-

ſtances, my good friend, are changed: let us bear the change without murmuring; it is the will of Infinite Wiſdom. We pleaſed ourſelves with the thoughts of being re-united; ſuch a re-union was not good for us. The goodneſs of Providence has prevented it, doubtleſs to prevent our miſery.

Long have I indulged the ſalutary deluſion, that my paſſion was extinguiſhed; the deluſion is now vaniſhed, when it can be no longer uſeful. You imagined me cured of my love; I thought ſo too. Let us thank heaven that the deception hath laſted as long as it could be of ſervice to us. In vain, alas! I endeavoured to ſtifle that paſſion which inſpired me with life; it was impoſſible, it was interwoven with my heart-ſtrings. It now expands itſelf, when it is no longer to be dreaded; it ſupports me now my ſtrength fails me; it chears my ſoul even in death. O my friend! I can now make this confeſſion without fear or ſhame; this involuntary ſentiment has been of no prejudice to my virtue, it has never ſullied my innocence; I have done my duty in all things that were in my power. If my heart was yours, it was my puniſhment and not my crime. My virtue is unblemiſhed, and my love has left behind it no remorſe.

I glory in my paſt life; but who could have anſwered for my future years? Perhaps, were I to live another day, I ſhould be culpable! what then might I not have been during whole years ſpent in your company? What dangers have I not run without knowing it? and to how much greater was I going to be expoſed? Every trial

has indeed been made; but trials may be too often repeated. Have I not lived long enough to be happy and virtuous? In taking me hence, heaven deprives me of nothing which I ought to regret. I go, my friend, at a moſt favourable moment; ſatisfied with you and myſelf, I depart in peace.

I foreſee, I feel your affliction; I know too well you will be left to mourn; the thoughts of your ſorrow cauſe my greateſt uneaſineſs. But reflect on the conſolation I leave with you. The obligations left you to diſcharge on the part of her who was ſo dear to you, ought to make it your duty to take care of yourſelf for her ſake. You are left in charge with her better half. You will loſe no more of Julia than you have long been deprived of. Her better part remains with you. Come and join her family, in the midſt of whom Julia's heart will ſtill be found. Let every one that was dear to her unite to give her a new being. Your buſineſs, your pleaſures, your friendſhip, ſhall be her own work. The bonds of our union ſhall give her new life, nor will ſhe totally expire but with the laſt of her friends.

Think there remains for you another Julia, and forget not what you owe her. You are both going to loſe the half of yourſelves; unite therefore to preſerve the other. The only method that remains for you to ſurvive me, is to ſupply my place in my family and with my children. Oh that I could but invent ſtill ſtronger bonds to unite thoſe who are ſo dear to me! but reflect how much you are indebted to each other, and let that reflection ſtrengthen your mutual at-

attachment. Your former objections, againſt entering into ſuch an engagement, will now become arguments for it. How can either of you ever ſpeak of me without melting into tenderneſs? No, Julia and Clara ſhall for the future be ſo united together in your thoughts, that it ſhall not be in the power of your heart to ſeparate them. Her's will ſhare in every thing yours has felt for her friend; ſhe will become both the confident and object of your paſſion. You will be happy in the enjoyment of that Julia who ſurvives, without being unfaithful to her you ſhall have loſt; and after ſo many diſappointments and misfortunes, ſhall, before the age of life and love is paſt, burn with a lawful flame, and poſſeſs the happineſs of an innocent paſſion.

It is by this chaſte union that you will be at liberty to employ your thoughts entirely on the diſcharge of thoſe duties which I have recommended; after which you need never be at a loſs to account for the good you have done on earth. You know there exiſts alſo a man worthy of an honour, to which he durſt not aſpire: you know him to have been your deliverer, as well as the huſband of your friend. Left alone, without connections in this life, without expectations from futurity, without joy, without comfort, without hope, he will ſoon be the moſt unfortunate of men. You owe to him the ſame pains he has taken with you, and you know the way to render them ſucceſsful. Remember the inſtructions of my former letter. Paſs your days with him. Let no one that loved me forſake him. As he reſtored your taſte for virtue,

ſo ſhew him the object, and the value of it. Be you truly a Chriſtian, to engage him to be one too; the ſucceſs of the attempt is more probable than perhaps you imagine. He has done his duty, I will do mine, and you muſt hereafter do yours. God is juſt, and my confidence in him will not deceive me.

I have but a word or two more to ſay, concerning my children. I know the trouble their education will coſt you; but at the ſame time I know you will not repine. In the moſt fatiguing moments of ſuch employment, reflect that they are the children of Julia, and every thing will be eaſy. Mr Wolmar will put into your hands the remarks I have made on your eſſay, and on the character of my two ſons. They are however unfiniſhed; and I leave them to you, not as rules for your conduct, but ſubmit them as hints to your judgment. Strive not to make my children ſcholars, but benevolent and honeſt men. Speak to them ſometimes of their mother—you know how dear they were to her—tell Mercellin I die willingly as I ſaved his life. Tell his brother it was for him I could have wiſhed to live. Tell their—but I find myſelf fatigued; I muſt put an end to this letter. In leaving my children with you, I part with you with leſs regret: for in them I ſtill continue with you.

Farewell, farewell, my dear friend! My life ends, alas! as it begun. Perhaps I have ſaid too much at a time when the heart diſguiſes nothing——ah! why ſhould I be afraid to expreſs all I feel? It is no longer I that ſpeak; I am already in the arms of death. Before you read this

this letter, the worms will be preying on the features of your friend, and will take poſſeſſion of a heart where your image will be found no more. But can my ſoul exiſt without you? without you what happineſs can I enjoy? No, we will not part——I go but to expect you. That virtue, which ſeparated us on earth, will unite us for ever in the manſions of the bleſſed. I die in that peaceful hope; too happy to purchaſe, at the expence of my life, the privilege of loving you without a crime, and of telling you ſo once more.

LETTER CLXIII.

From Mrs ORBE.

I AM glad to hear that you begin to be ſo well recovered, as to give us hopes of ſeeing you ſoon here. You muſt, my friend, endeavour to get the better of your weakneſs; and try to paſs the mountains before the winter prevents you. The air of this country, will agree with you; you will ſee here nothing but ſorrow; and perhaps our common affliction will be the means of ſoothing your's. Mine ſtands greatly in need of your aſſiſtance; for I can neither weep, nor ſpeak, nor make myſelf underſtood. Mr Wolmar indeed, underſtands me, but he makes me no anſwer. The affliction of an unfortunate father alſo is buried within himſelf; nor can any thing be conceived more cruelly tormenting: he neither hears, ſees, nor underſtands any thing. Age has no vent for its griefs. My children af-

fect me without knowing how to be affected themſelves. I am ſolitary in the midſt of company; a mournful ſilence prevails around me; and in the ſtupidity of my affliction, I ſpeak to nobody, having but juſt life enough in me to feel the horrors of death. O come, you who partake of my loſs, come and partake of my griefs. Come, cheriſh my heart with your ſorrow, refreſh it with your tears. This is the only conſolation I can hope for; the only pleaſure I can taſte.

But before you arrive, and inform me of your intentions relative to a project which I know has been mentioned to you, it is proper I ſhould inform you firſt of mine. I am frank and ingenuous, and therefore will diſſemble nothing. That I have loved you, I confeſs; nay, perhaps I love you ſtill, and ſhall always do ſo: but this I know not, nor deſire to know. I am not ignorant that it is ſuſpected, which I do not concern myſelf about. But what I have to ſay, and what you ought to obſerve, is this: That a man who was beloved by Julia, and could reſolve to marry another woman, would, in my opinion, be ſo baſe and unworthy a creature, that I ſhould think it a diſhonour to call ſuch a one my friend; and with reſpect to myſelf, I proteſt to you, that the man, whoever he be, that ſhall preſume to talk of love hereafter to me, ſhall never in his life have a ſecond opportunity.

Regard then only the employment that awaits you, the duties impoſed on you, and remember her to whom you engaged to diſcharge them. Her children are growing up apace, her father is inſenſibly waſting, her huſband is in conti-

nual

nual agitation of mind: in vain he ſtrives to think her annihilated; his heart rebels againſt his reaſon. He ſpeaks of her, he ſpeaks to her, and ſighs. Methinks I ſee already the repeated wiſhes of Julia half accompliſhed, and that you may put a finiſhing hand to ſo great a work. What a motive is here to induce both you and Lord B—— to repair hither. It is becoming his noble mind that our misfortunes have not made him change his reſolution.

Come then, dear and reſpectable friends, come and rejoin all that is left of Julia. Let us aſſemble all that was dear to her: let her ſpirit animate us, let her heart unite ours; let us live continually under her eye. I take a delight in conceiving that her amiable and ſuſceptible ſpirit will leave its peaceful manſions to re-viſit ours; that it will take a pleaſure in beholding its friend, imitate her virtues, in hearing her ſelf honoured by their acknowledgments, in ſeeing them kiſs her tomb, and ſigh at the repetition of her name. No, ſhe has not yet forſaken thoſe haunts which ſhe uſed to make ſo delightful. They are ſtill full of her. I ſee her in every object, I perceive her at every ſtep; every hour of the day I hear her well-known voice. It was here ſhe lived, here died, and here repoſe her aſhes——As I go, twice a-week, to the church, I caſt my eye on the ſad, revered ſpot——O beauty! is ſuch thy laſt aſylum?——ſincerity! friendſhip! virtue! pleaſure! innocence! all lie buried in her grave——I feel myſelf drawn as it were involuntarily to her tomb ——I ſhudder as I approach————I dread to violate the hallowed earth——I imagine that I

feel

feel it ſhake and tremble under my feet——that I hear a plaintive voice call to me from the hollow tomb——Clara! where art thou? O my Clara! what detains thee from thy friend?—— Alas! her grave hath yet but half her aſhes—— it is impatient for the remainder of its prey—— yet a little while, and it ſhall be ſatisfied *!

* After having read over this collection, I think I have diſcovered the reaſon why the intereſt, which I imagine every well-diſpoſed reader will take in them, though perhaps not very great, is yet agreeable: and this is, becauſe, little as it may prove, it is not excited by villanies or crimes, nor mingled with the diſagreeable ſenſations of hatred. I cannot conceive what pleaſure it can give a writer, to imagine and deſcribe the character of a villain; to put himſelf in his ſituation as often as he repreſents his actions, or to ſet them in the moſt flattering point of view. I cannot but greatly pity the authors of many of our tragedies, ſo full of wickedneſs and horror, who ſpend their lives in making characters act and ſpeak, which one cannot ſee or hear without ſhuddering. For my part, I ſhould think it a terrible misfortune to be condemned to ſuch labour: thoſe ſurely who do it for amuſement, muſt be violently zealous for the entertainment of the public. I admire their genius and talents; but I thank God for having denied ſuch talents to me.

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